University of Alberta

A Phenomenological Investigation of Outreach Work with Adolescents Involved in Prostitution

By

Karen Mae Dushinski

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

in

Counselling Psychology

Department of Educational Psychology

Edmonton, Alberta

Fall 2000

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K. Dushinski

9055-95 Street

Edmonton, Alberta

Canada

T6C 3W7

Sept 28/2000

ABSTRACT

Although the amount of research exploring adolescent involvement in prostitution has increased in recent years, one area that has been neglected is the experience of the workers who serve this marginalized population. This study involves a phenomenological exploration of the experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution. The participants for the study were chosen from four outreach agencies representing three Canadian provinces. Common aspects of their experience were: altered definitions of success, belief in integrity between advice to clients and how they lived their lives, the view of the client as the expert of their experience, the need for strong boundaries between home and work, and fundamental changes in the way one views relationships.

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled A Phenomenological Investigation of Outreach Work with Adolescents Involved in Prostitution submitted by Karen Mae Dushinski in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Counselling Psychology.

Dr. Robin Everall, Supervisor

Dr. Len Stewin

Dr. Maryanne Doherty

For the Clients of Crossroads

Your resiliency inspires me

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thank you and gratitude to Dr. Robin Everall for her support and guidance throughout the research process. I appreciate your generosity and your respectful approach with students. I would also like to thank Dr. Len Stewin and Dr. Maryanne Doherty for their time and for offering fresh perspectives to my research.

I would also like to thank the four participants for their willingness to share their time and experiences with me. I admire their dedication and determination in addressing the needs of sexually exploited youth, and in the struggle to change societal attitudes.

To my entire family, especially Mom and Dad, and many friends who have supported me by checking in on my progress and encouraging me to continue. Thank you also to my classmates who blazed the path before me and offered me their wisdom and wit.

Finally to my partner, Diana, who constantly supported my writing and my spirit to persevere.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The following study involves a phenomenological investigation of the experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution. This study evolved out of my curiosity to understand the relationship building process with a population I have worked with for three years. In many cases, outreach workers facilitate the initial connection with adolescents involved in prostitution. I hope to become more informed about the conditions surrounding adolescent involvement prostitution, as well as the characteristics needed in outreach workers to help facilitate an initial connection.

Prostitution itself is a controversial topic and has been throughout history. Countries struggle with how to define prostitution from a legal and moral perspective. As the debate continues among interest groups, politicians and citizens, the voices that are often lost in the discussion are those belonging to individuals involved in prostitution, however voluntary or involuntary their participation may be. Outreach workers can help facilitate the discussion because of the key role they play in connecting individuals involved in prostitution who have been marginalized by society with the rest of the community.

The increasing awareness of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in the early 1980's brought about many changes in the way mainstream society offered services to marginalized populations. This was especially evident in the development of outreach agencies to meet the needs of individuals involved in prostitution and intravenous drug users. As will be discussed later, it was believed by many that

individuals involved in prostitution and intravenous drug users were responsible for the spread of AIDS into mainstream heterosexual society. Many early efforts to initiate contact with these groups involved harm reduction techniques like condom distribution and needle exchange programs to promote safer sexual practices. It soon became apparent that there were many more services that were required ranging from addressing basic needs to offering resource information.

In Canada, representation of outreach services have been in operation for over a decade in most major cities across the country. It is for one such service that I have been employed for the past three years. My role differs from that of an outreach worker in that I am employed in a safehouse for individuals under the age of eighteen who have been involved or are at risk of becoming involved in prostitution. I feel it is important for my growth as a professional to understand the experience of an outreach worker who works with this population because of the unique role they play in initiating relationships with adolescents involved in prostitution.

All too often discussions around prostitution focus on the moral and legal questions. Although it is necessary to frame the study within this discussion, this study is intended to focus on the experience of outreach workers and their work with clients. Pettiway (1997) discussed that the stories of individuals on the streets serve "as a reminder of what we stand to lose in human capital if our policies and structures continue to corral the 'unwanted' in the barrios and ghettoes of our cities" (p. xii). By exploring the experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution, it is hoped that a greater understanding of the issues facing marginalized populations may be achieved.

Colaizzi (1978) discussed how the assumptions of empirical objectivity have led to the elimination of the human experience in psychological research. By exploring the experiences of individuals, phenomenology challenges these assumptions and recognizes the exclusion of 'other' in the creation of culture. By writing of the experience of an outreach worker who works with adolescents involved in prostitution, this phenomenological study contributes to a growing body of literature and research about those individuals often viewed as 'other'. As hooks (as cited in Pettiway, 1997) stated, "oppressed people resist by identifying themselves as 'subjects', by defining their reality, shaping their identity, naming their history, telling their story".

Overview of the Thesis

In Chapter 2 of this study, the literature discussing outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution will be explored. This chapter will include definitions of the terms to be used in the thesis, as well as an exploration of the history and development of outreach work, the construction of prostitution as a social problem, and other aspects of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution.

Chapter 3 involves an exploration of the methodology used and will include a discussion of phenomenological research, qualitative interviewing and a discussion of my presuppositions or biases on the phenomenon. Chapter 4 displays the data analysis results, which include syntheses of the participants' experiences of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution, as well as a discussion of the elements of the experience that are shared by some or all of the participants.

In Chapter 5, a discussion of the findings of the study will be presented. This will include an exploration of the shared aspects of the phenomenon, as well as a

discussion of the implications for outreach workers and helping professionals working with individuals involved in prostitution. Finally an exploration of possible avenues for future research will be explored.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this review of the literature is to discuss available information on outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution. The amount of literature on this particular topic is limited, especially in terms of Canadian research involving outreach workers. Much of the literature has therefore been gathered from research exploring outreach work with other marginalized populations such as intravenous drug users. Despite the difference in focus, the literature reveals many similarities in structure, history and philosophy of outreach organizations. Before beginning the review of the literature, it is essential to have a common understanding about the terms used throughout this study. The terms that will be defined below are: outreach work, adolescence, and prostitution.

Definitions

Outreach

Outreach organizations have traditionally taken on many forms, with a wide range of interests. Although outreach agencies have an array of clientele, one definition can be used to encompass it's various manifestations. Hartnoll, Rhodes and Jones (1990) defined outreach as any community oriented activity undertaken in order to contact individuals or groups from particular populations, who are not effectively contacted by traditional social services or through health education channels.

Adolescence

Santrock (1993) defines adolescence as "the developmental period of transition from childhood to early adulthood, entered approximately at 10 to 12 years of age and

ending at 18 to 22 years of age" (p. 15). For the purpose of this review, the definition that will be utilized is from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which defined a child as a person under the age of eighteen. As will be discussed later, many of the laws in Canada regarding children's involvement in prostitution rely on the above definition of a child under the age of 18. It is important however, to understand that although many outreach organizations are mandated to serve clients under the age of eighteen, the reality is that often services are extended for individuals over the age of eighteen, especially if they have a history with the agency.

Child Prostitution

Finally, the definition of prostitution is also dependent on societal as well as cultural assumptions. For the purpose of this study, the World Health Organization's (1996) definition will be used which defines child prostitution as " the act of engaging or offering the services of a child to perform sexual acts for money or other considerations with that person or any other person". Although in Canada there are many forms of prostitution, ranging from massage parlors to escort agencies, outreach efforts have generally focused on adolescents involved in street prostitution simply because of the lack of visibility and access they may have with other forms of prostitution.

The Construction of Prostitution as a Social Problem

In order to understand the climate in which outreach workers function, it is necessary to provide a philosophical view of the construction of prostitution as a social problem. Although prostitution has been described as 'the world's oldest profession' (Basserman, 1967) the discourse surrounding prostitution reflects little respect or

recognition of prostitution as a 'profession'. Shrage (1989) cautioned that by viewing prostitution as a 'profession' we "take for granted that 'prostitution' refers to a single transhistorical, transcultural activity" (p. 348).

The view of prostitution throughout history has depended on cultural and religious definitions of morality. Lerner (1986) and early feminist Goldman (1972) discussed prostitution as having religious significance in service to goddesses and gods in Babylonian temples. De Mause (1974) and Weisberg (1985) commented on the prevalence of young boys used for the sexual gratification of men in ancient Greece and Rome. Lerum (1999) characterized societal views of prostitution as created by the authorities that have power within society. In the past this has meant that religious authorities defined morality, while in today's secular climate, scientific knowledge is given the power to shape cultural views.

Despite many exceptions, individuals involved in prostitution have throughout history been marginalized by the rest of society, while their customers have escaped similar consequences. Lerum (1999) discussed how the sexual double standard around the issue of prostitution helped to further marginalize women involved in prostitution through what she viewed as state-sponsored crusades that

> created a fearful and punitive climate for female sex workers, where they (but not their clients) were stigmatized, isolated, and driven away from networks of community support-all of which certainly brought these women distress and increased their reliance on (male) organized crime (p. 12-13).

Further isolation from community supports, an increasingly punitive climate, and the focus on scientific knowledge led to the view of women involved in prostitution as 'vectors of disease'.

Early attempts by society to control prostitution-related activities based on the disease view were the Contagious Diseases Acts (CDA), which were introduced and extended in London in 1864, 1866 and 1869. The CDA were passed to deal with the increasing problem of prostitution and the spread of venereal diseases. It was one legislation among many that had been influenced by medical authorities and marked what Smart (1992) calls a "specific moment of struggle over the use of laws to regulate the feminine body" (p. 13).

The Act allowed authorities to force women suspected of prostitution, which could mean any woman unescorted by a man, to undergo a medical examination. This was done with the underlying belief that medical inspections would limit the spread of venereal disease to military personnel. Early feminists Josephine Butler and Emma Goldman responded to the law by questioning the sexual double standard that existed in Victorian society. Butler (1913) wrote that "a law which places the determination of the fact as to a woman's honour solely in the hands of a single justice of the peace, is a great infringement of constitutional right" (p. 118).

Goldman (1911) also questioned the sexual double standard as it related to prostitution claiming that "society considers the sex experiences of a man as attributes of his general development, while similar experiences in the life of a woman are looked upon as a terrible calamity" (p.185). While these early activists were successful in

having the CDA repealed, it is interesting that much of the same stigma currently exists for individuals involved in prostitution.

Modern manifestations of a similar bias against individuals involved in prostitution are evident in recent concerns regarding HIV/AIDS. Scrambler and Graham-Smith (1992) commented on how the view of women involved in prostitution as 'vectors of disease' is still apparent and that

> there was little doubt that the initial attempts to research and influence sex workers' behavior in the mid-1980's were more informed by concern about HIV transmission into the wider population than about the vulnerability of women sex workers themselves (p. 69).

The public response to the threat of HIV/AIDS has not quite reached the same fervor as in Victorian times however, there have been legislative attempts to monitor and control the health of individuals involved in prostitution. Alexander (1997) commented that "heterosexual transmission is overwhelmingly male-to-female, yet the panic is in the other direction" (p. 89). Supporting Alexander's view is the research of Thomas, Plant, Plant and Sales (1989) who concluded that "there is very little evidence that HIV infection in Britain has been spread by prostitution" (p. 149). Day, Ward and Harris (1988) also agreed with the conclusion that individuals involved in prostitution are not responsible for the spread of HIV/AIDS.

One of the ironic effects of the disease view of prostitution has been a growing awareness of the needs of street populations. This has resulted in increasing funding for research and the development of services. Barnard and McKeganey (1996) stated:

> one of the few good things to come out of the AIDS epidemic has been the forced recognition of the health needs of groups of people (drug users, prostitutes, men who have sex with men) who are socially marginalized and who often remain hidden to services (p. 103).

The researchers claimed that their study would likely not have attracted funding were it not for the public perception that individuals involved in prostitution were responsible for the spread of HIV.

In critiquing the construction of social problems, Lerum (1999) argued that the disease view of prostitution is one that is necessary within the production of institutionalized knowledge, and that when this happens the focus is no longer on changing institutions, but on changing individual behavior. Lerum (1999) posited that a social problem becomes institutionalized by defining itself in reasonable terms (framed as conquerable), having recognized groups with legitimate authority, and having enough power and resources to build solutions within the problems' defined borders (p. 22).

Lerum (1999) claimed that the view of social problems in disease terms is in response to the rise of scientific authority over religious authority, the rise in individualism and the decline of community and family anchors, the rise of the bureaucratic nation-state, and the institutionalization of knowledge (p. 31). Gusfield (1989) discussed how often the study of social problems can become an industry with their own agendas, while Brown and Margo (1978) discussed the creation of new occupations within the disease framework.

Brown and Margo (1978) also discussed the effects of the rise in scientific knowledge and reliance on a medical model as the paradigm for addressing social problems. The researchers claimed that past responses to social problems by health workers have centred on the maladaptive methods of communities and individuals rather than considering the social climate and social structure as causing social problems. They continued that

> only when touched by growing political movements, for example, during the Progressive Era, the Great Depression, and the more recent civil rights movements, has the public health movement viewed advocates of major social change as more than a fringe to be tolerated. (p. 5)

Brown and Margo (1978) explained this process by exploring the roots of health education in psychology's learning theory and later in social psychology. The researchers claimed that although these contributions helped to build a theoretical framework for health education providers, the focus remained on the individual and not on the system. Another result of this theoretical framework according to the researchers is that social workers and health education workers planned and implemented changes approved by funding agencies or individuals who are most often far removed the communities that are most directly affected by the problems being addressed.

Weisberg (1985) offered a similar critique of the construction of adolescent prostitution as a social problem. The researcher indicated that adolescent prostitution began to be seen as a social problem as the result of a number of social movements occurring during the 1960's and 1970's, including the hippie and counterculture

movements; the increasing awareness of runaway youth; the recognition of child abuse and child sexual abuse; and the children's rights movement (p.1).

Although outreach workers may not need to enter into philosophical debates regarding the social construction of prostitution, the effects of societal attitudes are generally difficult to escape. The challenge for outreach workers is to play a role in addressing a social problem while avoiding what Lerum (1999) calls the disintegrating humanity that occurs when people navigate through bureaucracies.

The Development of Outreach Agencies

The concept of outreach work has a long history in the 'helping professions'. Ashery (1992) discussed outreach work as having roots in the industrial revolution in response to so-called social ills. During the nineteenth century, laypeople in Philadelphia were used to educate 'vulnerable populations' about tuberculosis. This effort can be seen as an early community based health intervention and is related to the development of modern outreach efforts.

Outreach services were also used in the 1930's in response to widespread poverty during the Great Depression. Lutzin (1973) called this period 'the Golden Age' of human services, when innovative new programs developed to deal with the increasing intensity of social problems. The concept of outreach work grew in the 1950's, however during the 1960's and 1970's it became more organized as a result of the growing awareness and activism on behalf of marginalized populations.

Much of the literature in the 1980's on outreach programs with individuals involved in prostitution has centred around efforts to address HIV/AIDS with intravenous drug users, however there has always been a significant overlap of this

population with individuals involved in prostitution. Rhodes, Holland and Hartnoll (1991) claimed that 60% of their outreach clients that used intravenous drugs were involved in prostitution as well. These two groups were seen as at greater risk for contracting HIV due to their likelihood of sharing syringes or having multiple sexual partners. Other factors which made these populations more vulnerable were their lack of access to traditional health and social services and the marginalized status afforded them by society.

Because of their status as 'other', marginalized populations are often seen as dispensable. Alexander (1996) claimed that

> for most of history, few countries have established social and/or health services designed to meet sex worker's needs or even treat them as ordinary human beings (p. x).

As evidence of this comment, it was not until mainstream heterosexual society began experiencing increased HIV infection rates that concentrated outreach efforts with intravenous drug users and individuals involved in prostitution began.

Rhodes, Hartnoll and Johnson (1991b) describe the five main perspectives that HIV outreach work developed from public health, youth and community, ethnographic research, social and political, and self-help (p. 8-9). The public health perspective developed from the medical model resulting in a focus aimed at identifying those most at-risk of infectious diseases. The youth and community perspective evolved out of philanthropic undertakings to deal with so-called 'juvenile delinquents', and is a more action-oriented approach rather than a research based approach. The ethnographic research perspective grew out of the field of anthropology and therefore appropriately

deals with individuals within their social and cultural environments. The social and political reformist perspective grew out of philanthropic and paternalistic efforts in the 19th century to serve the poor and homeless. The Salvation Army is the most recognizable example of this type of outreach service. Finally the self-help perspective, which developed in response to inadequate services within communities and a recent example of this type of outreach has been the gay community's response to AIDS.

Although outreach work with individuals involved in prostitution has many overlapping clientele with AIDS related outreach, differences that exist may be a result of the ways in which communities have been mobilized to address the issue of prostitution. Another factor influencing the focus of the organization is the philosophy of it's staff members. What is clear is that no two outreach organizations will have the exact same mandate, nor the same philosophical background. Also, depending on the geographical location and resulting needs of their clients, outreach organizations will vary accordingly.

Rhodes, Holland and Hartnoll (1991a) viewed the evolution of HIV outreach agencies within what was referred to as a larger community health perspective. The researchers saw outreach organizations as having a bottom-up approach characterized by involving the community as participants in addressing their health priorities. The community perspective was defined by the researchers as ensuring

> the negotiation and participation with clients in the process of education and prevention, and the facilitation, if possible, of collective and community change.

They continued that this perspective involves

> the clients in the planning and organization of service developments; a process of empowerment rather than paternalism or prescriptions, where client's needs are neither assumed or prescribed (p. 168-169).

Homans and Aggleton (1988) distinguished between top down and bottom up approaches to AIDS health education. The researchers described top down approaches as relying on the assumption that individuals will change their behavior when health information is provided. This is closely related to the knowledge-attitude-behavior model of behavior change.

The three types of bottom up approaches to health education are the self-empowerment model, the community oriented model and the social transformatory model. The self-empowerment model described by French and Adams (1986) is an attempt to improve the health of individuals by developing their ability to control their health status within their own environment. The community oriented model described by Aggleton (1989) aims to enhance the health of individuals by bringing about community change through collective action. Finally, the social transformatory model described by Aggleton (1989) aims to not only achieve behavior change through collective action, but also attempt to bring about social change.

The difficulty in the development of an outreach agency is to utilize a bottom up approach within a top down society. This problem is discussed by Rhodes, et al. (1991a) in their evaluation of the CLASH outreach program. The researchers claimed that

> if part of the role of outreach work is to identify clients' needs and inform service responses (which is how most managers 'justified' the continued pursuit of referral objectives), then outreach interventions must also be given the encouragement, autonomy and independence to develop their service through the negotiation and participation with clients according to their needs (p.171).

What occurs within an agency with both top down and bottom up approaches, is a clash between addressing service needs through existing frameworks versus creating new services based on the needs of clients.

While outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution may not have exactly the same focus as AIDS outreach, there are many commonalties. By utilizing aspects of each of the above models of health education, outreach workers develop services that will address the needs of adolescents involved in prostitution, as well as addressing the larger societal issues surrounding prostitution.

Models of Behavior Change

Although the evolution of outreach agencies grew out of medical and sociological concerns, the individual work with clients benefits from an understanding of basic models of behavior change and cycles of addictions. Rhodes and Humfleet (1993) discussed a six-month HIV risk intervention program for injecting drug and crack users which offers goal-oriented behavioral counselling and HIV testing combined with the support of peers and outreach workers. Although the program deals specifically with injecting drug and crack users, prostitution outreach agencies have significant overlapping populations and similar cycles of addiction to street life itself.

The first aspect of the program is an understanding of the cycle of addiction as outlined by Prochaska, Norcross, and Di Clemente (1994). The researchers' model discussed the six stages of change as: pre-contemplation, preparation, contemplation, action, maintenance and termination. The model was employed by Rhodes and Humfleet (1993) "as a vehicle for increasing participants' understanding and clarifying their expectations regarding the process of personal behavior change" (p. 191). For outreach workers, understanding where their clients are in the cycle of addiction can help facilitate change at the pace of the individual and the employment of intervention strategies appropriate to the particular stages.

The first stage of the model is pre-contemplation characterized by a denial of the addiction, resistance to change, lack of information about the problem and a sense of hopelessness or demoralization. Prochaska, Norcross, and DiClemente (1994) suggest several strategies for helping professionals assisting clients in the pre-contemplation stage: addressing specific disruptive behaviors, insistence of personal responsibility for choices, frequently recommending behavior change without nagging, making individuals aware of their defenses, and creating more positive choices for individuals.

Contemplation is the second stage in the model and is characterized by a desire to change, wishful thinking, re-evaluation of self and premature action. Suggested approaches during this stage include: empathy, warmth, observational input and sharing knowledge about the addiction. Another suggestion by Prochaska, Norcross, and Di Clemente (1994) is to have the client complete a functional analysis of their

behavior consisting of the antecedent, behavior and consequences (ABC) in order to enlighten them about things they feel they have no control over.

The third stage is the preparation stage, characterized by rejecting problematic behavior, envisioning the future, anxiety over possible failure and commitment to change through inclusion of others in a plan. The most important aspect of helping during this stage of the addiction cycle involves recognition of what the client is experiencing and supportive attention.

The fourth stage of the model is the action stage, which is characterized by substituting problematic behaviors with healthy alternatives or active diversions such as exercise, relaxation, and counter-thinking. The action stage also involves deliberate avoidance of environments that would pose a risk for relapse. In order to help people at the action stage, the researchers suggested informal or formal contracting for a change in problem behaviors, positive reinforcement, and encouraging involvement in a support group.

The fifth stage is described as the maintenance stage and may involve the struggle to sustain the progress made during the previous four stages. The aspects of this stage that may result in relapse are the tendency to devalue one's own contributions to success, overconfidence, daily temptation and self-blame. In order to maintain the changes made, one must: avoid temptation in the form of environment or damaging associations, create a new lifestyle, overcome negative thinking, and achieve a measure of what Bandura (1977) called self-efficacy. The helping relationship during this phase may include revising the contract forged during the action phase, encouraging

clients to help others through the changes, patience and persistence recognizing it is a long-term process to overcome addictions.

The final stage, although not explored by Rhodes and Humfleet (1993) is the termination phase involving a change in life-style, a lack of temptation, evolved self-image and overall healthier lifestyle. Little is discussed in terms of a helper role, however it is assumed that by this stage, the individual is able to sustain the changes and is virtually free from the struggle from addiction. Prochaska, Norcross, and DiClemente (1994) claimed that "although you can never be problem free, you can live in ways that reduce the recurrence of self-defeating behaviors" (p. 279).

The use of social learning theory (Bandura and Walters, 1963; Bandura, 1977), in the context of the HIV/AIDS outreach project of Rhodes and Humfleet (1993) relies on the assumption that individuals learn by observing others seen as models of behavior. The use of peers or indigenous outreach workers may facilitate the desired behavior change. For adolescents involved in prostitution, behavior change may range from dealing with addictions to leaving the streets altogether. Bandura and Walters (1977) claimed that models with high competence and status were more likely to encourage success.

Another factor contributing to behavior change is an individual's sense of self-efficacy. Bandura (1977) wrote that

> an efficacy expectation is the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcomes... Efficacy expectations determine how much effort people will expend and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles and aversive experiences (p.79).

Rhodes and Humfleet (1993) summarized a person's expectation of self-efficacy as deriving from four principles sources: actual past performance, vicarious experience with the activity, verbal persuasion and experience of physiological arousal (anxiety) (p.194). Contact through outreach agencies and other programs can assist individuals who have poor sense of self-efficacy, in order to enable them to change behaviors they view as problematic.

Many outreach agencies also rely on the technique of behavioral contracting, which has its root in operant conditioning techniques developed by B. F. Skinner (1953). Skinner believed that much of human behavior could be understood by how our actions operate on the environment to produce changes in the environment. This principle was discussed more recently by O'Banion and Whaley (1981) who suggested the use of behavior contracting in a variety of settings such as therapeutic, educational, medical, rehabilitation and employer/employee relations. In order to increase the likelihood of success, the researchers claimed that the behavioral contract required three aspects: the specificity of behavior to be addressed, the ability for the behavior to be accurately observed, and the specificity and consistency of rewards.

Keeping Prochaska, Norcross, and DiClemente's change model, as well as Bandura's social learning model and the behavior contracting of O'Banion and Whaley (1981) in mind, Ashery (1992) commented about the overall approach AIDS outreach workers must take with their clients. The message given must be

> congruent with the contact's preexisting tastes, beliefs, and values. The message must be personalized; it must build on an individual's preexisting motivations;

it must offer an immediate incentive to change high-risk behaviors; and it must be continuously reinforced (p.27).

Clearly, although many outreach organizations have evolved out of disciplines outside of psychology, an understanding of basic psychological theories and cycles of addiction can help facilitate appropriate interventions for adolescents involved in prostitution. This awareness of psychological theories however, is only one small part of the process of connecting with marginalized populations.

Services Offered by Outreach Agencies

Rhodes, et al. (1991a) discussed what they viewed as two types of outreach services: detached and peripatetic. Detached services are offered outside of the agency setting on the streets and are aimed at risk reduction as well as attempting to facilitate change directly. Some examples of detached services include distribution of condoms, clean syringes, and violent customer information. Peripatetic services are focused at the organizational rather than individual level, and the goal is to increase the range of people contacted through the outreach organization. This work may be undertaken in the community through education, advocacy and professional development.

In the past, there have been attempts at understanding the needs of individuals involved in prostitution however most of the research was focused on pathology, or in the case of adolescents, delinquency. Weisberg (1985) classified the needs of adolescents involved in prostitution in four categories: immediate needs (food, housing, money), proximate needs (independent living skills), ancillary needs (legal, medical and dental) and remote needs (psychological). Snell (1995) added social services and vocational training to the above list.

Weisberg (1985) claimed that the most difficult need to address for youth involved in prostitution is long term shelter. Depending on the mandate of the program, clients may or may not be restricted from prostitution-related activities. The differential association theory as discussed by Snell (1995) implies that intervention with individuals in prostitution "should include disconnecting them from members who subscribe to illegal social practices" (p. 94), and work towards establishing new networks of people with different values. Outreach programs providing housing should consider whether they require regulations for clients that address continued associations with peers still involved in criminal activities. The alternative is to offer a drop-in centre which Weisberg (1985) recommended as an effective method of outreach to youth involved in prostitution and other street activities.

Rhodes, et al. (1991a) discussed the need for a strong commitment on the part of outreach workers to "expecting and accepting change to the style and nature of existing service delivery" (p. 197). Barnard and McKeganey (1996) credited the AIDS epidemic for making a number of changes in the way services are offered to hard-to-reach populations, including being more sensitive to the needs of the populations they serve and being more innovative in the way services are provided.

In her study of a New York City based HIV outreach project with individuals involved in prostitution, Weiner (1996) explored the social needs of women involved in prostitution and concluded that offering services where the clients are, rather than the traditional approach of having a centralized service delivery site was essential. Other suggestions included offering basic needs like food, clothing, shelter and a mail drop for homeless individuals in order to support their attempts to connect with agencies.

As mentioned above, detached outreach work is focused on harm reduction. Chitwood et al. (1991) compared the use of needles with having high risk sex and found that the behaviors were highly correlated, therefore individuals engaging in one high risk behavior are likely to engage in the other. This is supported by the research quoted earlier of Rhodes, et al. (1991a) that 60% of outreach clients that used intravenous drugs were involved in prostitution as well. Both activities prove risky for the participants and the link in their risky behaviors is illustrated in the overlap of the populations. Outreach agencies must be sensitive to the needs of both populations, providing harm reduction materials for individuals in prostitution as well as intravenous drug users.

Rhodes and Quirk (1996) discussed the importance of analyzing risk reduction behavior before developing community interventions. They indicate that

> perceptions of risk acceptability and priority tend to be a function of the norms and routines of lifestyle rather than of individual decision-making alone... interventions need to recognize that risk perception is socially organized (p.164).

They continued that the starting point for risk reduction intervention is to understand how risk is perceived among the target population. In dealing with the risks associated with intravenous drug use or with the threat of violence by customers and pimps, it is crucial for outreach workers to be knowledgeable about what Rhodes and Quirk (1996) defined as "interventions oriented toward norm-and group-mediated change" (p. 165).

Chitwood et al. (1991) stated that risk reduction must also take into account the target audience and be presented in an understandable and factual way. The

information therefore is only as effective as the message is relevant to the person's needs. Moore, Rosenthal, and Mitchell (1996) discussed the tendency of adolescents to have a perceived sense of invulnerability to risk, and that this is especially true when it involves a young person's sexual behavior. The researchers commented that it is important to understand this when planning intervention strategies. Outreach workers must accurately assess the risk behavior of adolescents involved in prostitution in order to prevent further entrenchment in prostitution.

Finally, Power, Hartnoll and Daviaud (1988) explored the risk behavior of injecting drug users in London. The researchers found that aggressive outreach work should be encouraged in order to contact injecting drug users on the streets since those who had contact with agencies were more likely to reduce their risky behavior. The results have been supported in another study conducted by McCoy, Rivers and Khoury (1993) that illustrated having contact with agencies can be as important as the information provided to encourage behavior change. The significance of contact with outreach workers underlines the importance of the individual characteristics of workers.

Characteristics of Outreach Workers

Numerous characteristics have been discussed as essential for outreach workers in order to facilitate connections with their target populations. Rhodes, et al. (1991a) stated that the types of individuals chosen to work for an outreach agency is a reflection of the philosophy and orientation of the project. Despite the unique goals within agencies, there are some characteristics however, that could be seen as universally desirable.

Ashery (1992) discussed the personal characteristics and communication skills necessary for HIV outreach workers, including empathy, respect, genuineness, concreteness, confrontation and self-disclosure. In their exploration of the Miami Outreach Project for Injecting Drug Users, Chitwood et al. (1991) commented on qualities that were deemed important for outreach workers: familiarity with the subculture, credibility with the target group, trustworthiness, enthusiasm, use of humor and freedom from addiction issues. Rhodes et al. (1991a) added that outreach workers need to have a 'sixth sense' because they are often involved in precarious situations on the street. In his early study of outreach work in inner cities in the United States, Bannon (1973) added the qualities of a flexible outlook, ability to cope with unexpected crisis and knowledge of resources as essential.

Commenting on hiring, Ashery (1992) and Rhodes et al. (1991a) suggested matching outreach workers to the target population as well as staff diversity was a good strategy for employers. According to Rhodes, et al. (1991b) the common backgrounds of outreach workers are youth and community workers, nurses, social workers and counsellors.

Other researchers have stressed the need for an open-mind and non-judgmental attitude. Snell (1995) claimed that workers should avoid imposing their morals and values on a clients sexual behavior and that part of this is to realize that when outreach is in contact with clients on the street, they need to respect that these individuals are in their work environment. McKeganey and Barnard (1996) cautioned others that

> we may believe that there is nothing that could make us begin to sell sex no matter how desperate our circumstances might become. But how confident can

> we really be in such an assertion unless we have experienced the same circumstances ? (p. 24)

Power (1996) also discussed the importance of developing trusting relationships with key figures on the streets and "once the confidence, trust and cooperation of such key role players have been gained, then health education and prevention materials can be routinely supplied and promoted" (p. 156).

Another way to facilitate the building of trust and connection with individuals involved in prostitution is the use of indigenous workers defined as workers that have at one time been part of the population being served. This is very common in outreach with intravenous drug users, as well as outreach with individuals involved in prostitution. Ashery (1992) commented that "often the target populations do not trust outside intervention because of the long history of punitive approaches intended to control crime" (p. 3). Use of indigenous workers may add to the credibility of an agency and increase the likelihood of trust being established.

Chitwood et al. (1991) claimed that if indigenous workers were hired however, additional considerations must be made. It is extremely important for indigenous outreach workers to have dealt with their addictions, and in the case of prostitution, the street life itself can be an addiction. Ashery (1992) discussed several other characteristics important for indigenous outreach workers and also pertinent to outside hiring such as: fluency in street language, connectedness with the community, non-judgmental, skillful at observation, and compassionate.

Although the individual characteristics of outreach workers are extremely important, it is also essential to understand the population being served. Snell (1995)

discussed the approach needed by individuals working with adolescents involved in prostitution claiming that "alternative techniques should be employed to help clients who are alienated by overly bureaucratized agencies that 'service' people rather than 'serve' people" (p. 12). By understanding the needs and overall characteristics of adolescents involved in prostitution, outreach workers can help to create services that serve their clients rather than service them.

Characteristics of Adolescents Involved in Prostitution

Understanding the characteristics of adolescents involved in prostitution includes understanding their help-seeking behavior in order to ensure outreach efforts are appropriately focused. In a study of the help-seeking behavior of young males involved in prostitution, Snell (1995) discussed where youth turn when they are in need of assistance. When asked where they learn about help in times of need, 34 % learned from friends, 29 % learned from family, 20 % through advertisements, 10 % learned from professionals and 3 % dealt with things on their own. What is most interesting about these results is that 49 % of respondents did not seek professional help. It is clear that outreach workers must make a concerted effort to reach youth who are involved with prostitution and other street activity.

One of the major studies with individuals involved in prostitution was completed by Silbert and Pines (1981) and involved interviews with 200 juveniles and adults. Over two-thirds of all individuals interviewed were from average or higher income families. Over three-fourths of individuals had one parent absent from the household at least part of the time. Sixty percent of the subjects experienced sexual abuse under the age of 16 years, the majority of these by father figures.

An adaptation of the questionnaire developed by Silbert and Pines was utilized by Canadian researchers to compile information on adolescents involved in prostitution in this country. Nadon, Koverola, Schludermann (1998) interviewed adolescents involved in prostitution as well as a control group of adolescents not involved in order to validate the results. The results suggested the average age at initial prostitution activity was 14.1 years. At the time of the interview, the adolescents involved in prostitution ranged in age from 13 to 18 years, with an average of 16.3 years.

Regarding racial composition of the group involved in prostitution, 39 % were white, 32 % were Metis, 18 % were Aboriginal, and 11 % were black. A significantly higher number of adolescents involved in prostitution had run away from home. Although alcohol abuse was similar between the groups, adolescents in prostitution were more likely to use 'harder' drugs such as acid, cocaine, amphetamines, and a Talwin and Ritalin combination. Although Nadon et al. (1998) did not find a significant difference in the incidence of childhood sexual abuse between the control group and the group of adolescents involved in prostitution, other studies have contradicted these results. For example, in an earlier study, Bagley and Young (1987) found that 73 % of women in prostitution had experienced child sexual abuse compared to 29 % of a control group. It appears that the differences found in the various studies may be a result of different definitions and varying parameters within the studies.

Although there are numerous examples of research exploring childhood sexual abuse as a precursor to involvement in prostitution, this type of research seems to stem from the view of prostitution as 'pathological' or resulting from trauma. Rather than speculate on how abuse may have affected an adolescents' entrance into prostitution, it

may simply be appropriate for outreach workers to be aware of the affects of sexual abuse and its manifestations in individuals.

Benjamin (1985) discussed the issue of juvenile prostitution in the province of Ontario by exploring precursors, entrance, and exit features. Benjamin (1985) indicated that the precursors to adolescent involvement in prostitution were as follows: child abuse (sexual or physical), social isolation of children and families, family violence, extrafamilial sexual assault, institutionalizing children, and lack of employment options. In terms of entrance into prostitution, Benjamin (1985) credited poverty, peer relations, love, lack of perceived alternatives, runaway behavior, street contact and coercion as contributing in varying degrees to youth's entrance. Weisberg (1985) added that relatives, 'Johns', and the juveniles themselves influenced their involvement in prostitution.

In discussing an individual's exit from prostitution, Benjamin (1985) concluded that love, conventional alternatives (employment or education), deviant alternatives (other criminal activity besides prostitution), involvement in the criminal justice system, despair or death, may be part of the reason why adolescents decide to leave the streets. Weisberg (1985) commented that the best opportunities for successful intervention with adolescents involved in prostitution are within the first two weeks of entrance because entrenchment in the street life occurs so quickly. An outreach worker's constant presence on the streets can therefore prove to be an important aspect of early intervention of adolescent involvement in street life.

Finally, a general comment about the lure of prostitution for many youth. Bresnahan (1995) explored street life in New York City's Times Square and found that

street life was appealing to youth because of the freedom it provided. Weisberg (1985) discussed how youth become drawn to the streets because it appears to be a romantic lifestyle. Weisberg (1985) also commented that often youth become caught in a 'failure syndrome' because of a possible history of failure in school or peer relations. The resulting problems with self-esteem lead to a lack of follow through and a general distrust of social services. Bannon (1973) concluded that street life can often have financial rewards for youth and in order for outreach to be successful, there must be more lucrative offers made to adolescents who consider leaving prostitution.

Legal Aspects of Adolescent Prostitution in Canada

Allman (1999) outlined the development of laws addressing prostitution and wrote that the earliest laws in Canada initiated in Britain in 1759, were known as the vagrancy laws of the Nova Scotia Act. There have been revisions of these laws, however the foundations for much of today's current laws have come from these early efforts (Lowman as cited in Allman, 1999). Currently in Canada, Sections 210-213 in the Criminal Code makes it illegal to: communicate in a public place for the purpose of engaging in prostitution; keep or be an inmate of a common bawdy-house; provide directions, take or show someone to a common bawdy-house; procure or assist or obtain a person for sexual services on behalf of a third party; live on the avails or benefit from the prostitution of another person; or purchase or offer to purchase sexual services from someone under the age of 18 years (as cited in Allman, 1999, p.13).

In 1972, the Vag-C law was repealed, and a new law prohibiting solicitation (Section 195.1) was added to the Criminal Code of Canada. For the first time, the Code allowed for the arrest of males working in prostitution. In 1985, Bill C-49, the

communicating law (Section 213), was passed which was an attempt to further "equalize the enforcement of the laws between men and women" (Allman, 1999, p. 14). Despite the equalization of the laws however, there has been a great deal of variability in the application of the laws across Canada.

In February of 1999, the Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act (P-ChIP) was enacted. This law was a response by the Government of Alberta to ongoing abuses by pimps and 'Johns' of adolescents involved in prostitution. The Act viewed children involved in prostitution as victims of sexual abuse. Based on this assumption, child welfare workers and police were allowed to apprehend children involved in or at risk of becoming involved in prostitution, and place them in a protective safehouse for 72 hours. After this confinement period, their needs would be evaluated and another placement would be found for them. The Act also provided for the arrest of pimps and 'Johns' who, once convicted, could be fined $25,000, jailed for up to two years, or both (Government of Alberta, 1999). The benefit to agencies providing outreach services was an increase in resources and increased awareness in the community of the issue of prostitution.

On July 28, 2000, the P-ChIP Act was revoked by Alberta Judge Karen Jordan due to a violation of three sections of the Canadian Charter of Rights. The main problem with the Act from a legal standpoint was that the right to appear before a judge was not granted prior to the 72 hour confinement period. The Alberta Government responded that children will continue to be protected through existing aspects of the Child Welfare Act. Section 1 of the Act provides child welfare workers the authority to remove children for conditions where "the guardian of the child is unable or unwilling

to protect the child from physical injury or sexual abuse" (Government of Alberta, 1984).

Several other provinces have been considering similar legislation in order to protect children. In British Columbia, their 'secure-care law' is set to take effect in the spring of 2001. The new law will include an appeal process that the government hopes will help to avoid difficulties similar to those encountered in Alberta (Griffin, 2000). Although the awareness of the sexual exploitation of children is increasing, there are still many legal questions to be addressed. As Barnard and McKegney (1996) discussed,

> social responses to prostitution are never far removed from the political domain, since so much of what happens in commercial sex is influenced by current legislation and public opinion. (p. 114)

Outreach workers therefore are forced to confront youth prostitution within a wider framework of public opinion and government laws, which is one example of the barriers to the building of relationship with clients.

Barriers Facing Outreach Workers

The barriers that exist for serving adolescents involved in prostitution can be daunting at times, however an important role for outreach workers is connecting youth to services in the community. Weiner (1996) discussed the difficulty many individuals involved in prostitution have accessing drug and alcohol treatment centres. Often residential treatment programs are necessary, and yet beds are often limited, especially for adolescents with addictions. Honey (1988) agreed that the lack of treatment facilities can lead to individuals not being able to sustain their risk reduction changes.

Because of the cyclical nature of drug, alcohol and street addictions, the need for accessible and prompt treatment for adolescents is even more immediate.

Rhodes et al. (1991a) have suggested that overcoming the perceptions that service providers have of marginalized populations itself can prove to be a barrier to accessing services. An example of this type of bias can be seen within the hospital environment when individuals involved in prostitution are treated with extra precautionary measures based on the assumption of sexually transmitted diseases. Levin and Sarri (1974) discussed how the fragmentation of services, the stigmatization of the target population and various bureaucratic limitations hinder work with juveniles. Scrambler and Graham-Smith (1992) claimed that the

> social norms condemning sex work, articulated in law and enforced through police and court activity, constitute the major impediment to safeguarding the health of women in the sex industry (p. 78).

Bannon (1973) noted that the most effective outreach agencies have pre-established liaisons with other community agencies, and although most of these agencies will be 'behind the desk' types, it is important for outreach workers to be forthright in their advocacy. This may often lead to the creation of new services as well as the assurance from existing agencies that they are fulfilling their mandates.

Ashery (1992) mentioned that in order for outreach workers to overcome barriers they needed to ensure cooperation from four areas: justice and police, government organizations, healthcare, and religious organizations. In terms of cooperation with police, outreach workers must be aware of their clients' hesitancy to align themselves with officers. Scrambler and Graham-Smith (1992) discussed how in

London, individuals in prostitution would not take literature or condoms from outreach workers because it may be used against them as evidence of their activities when confronted by police. The cooperation of outreach workers with other agencies therefore, must be pursued carefully in order to maintain trusting relationships with clients.

Rhodes et al. (1991a) also discussed the uneasy alliance between outreach workers and the police, and claimed there were both positives and negatives to developing this relationship. The positive aspect could be to help walk clients through the court process, while the negative would be if the clients viewed collaboration with police as "collusive and threatening" (p. 136).

One of the main practical impediments to outreach work is the difficulty organizations have securing funding. This problem can affect both the clients and outreach workers. Friedman, et al. (1990) indicated that while the pay scale for outreach workers is generally reasonable, however many workers may only be employed on a part-time basis. The researchers claimed the lack of professional hierarchy was contributing to the high turnover rate, claiming that few workers last more than two years in outreach work. Friedman et al. (1990) also added that "the benefits of working at a life-saving occupation are eroded by the daily realities of working in a dangerous...setting" (p. 182). Rhodes, Hartnoll and Johnson (1991b) claimed that costs of outreach are relatively high with input exceeding output. Unfortunately outreach workers may witness few tangible results of what their program offers to youth.

Rhodes et al. (1991a) discussed the difficulty that outreach agencies have evaluating the outcome of their work with clients, as well as the issue of competing with other agencies for limited amounts of donations and grants. Bannon (1973) commented that often funding, especially government funding, relies on 'results' for justification of the money provided. As discussed earlier, definitions of individual success must be modified in outreach work, and it is important to consider this modification at the agency level as well.

Other pragmatic problems associated with outreach work with 'hard to reach' populations are related to the staffing of agencies. Rhodes et al. (1991a) found that a key element in connecting with individuals on the street was the actual time spent 'pounding the pavement' and that adequate staffing was essential to fulfill this function. Any loss of client contact posed a significant disruption to the goals of the agency. Client contact was affected by the need to work in pairs for safety reasons, meaning the interactions were more intrusive. Contact was also interrupted by staff shortages for various reasons such as illness or holidays.

Regarding the composition of outreach agencies, Rhodes, et al. (1991a) claim that the issue of race can be a barrier for workers trying to connect with clients. Other researchers have suggested that the outreach workers be matched with their target populations. For example, Friedman, et al. (1990) suggested that for outreach work with intravenous drug users, an opposite sex worker was viewed as more effective. The researchers qualify this statement stating that when issues of an intimate nature are being discussed, it is more important to have a same sex outreach worker.

Another problem related to staffing is the configuration of outreach agencies and the difficulties that may be found within agencies. Rhodes, et al. (1991a) evaluated the CLASH outreach program in London, England. A difficulty that developed within this program was the differing concerns of the voluntary and statutory members of the agency. This represents what was discussed earlier in terms of top down and bottom up approaches with different priorities. An excerpt from the evaluation serves to illustrate these divergent views.

> There was an uneasy ambivalence between statutory and voluntary managers' perceptions of what they expected their project to achieve. These differences- between the desire to 'account for numbers' and to achieve a certain quantity of project output and the competing desire to emphasize the quality of client contacts- were inextricably linked to managers' wider perceptions of the fundamental role of the project in delivering and providing services. (p.129)

The difficulties developed from the different priorities held by the voluntary and statutory sections of the project, and the fundamentally different goals held by the two areas.

A final barrier to outreach work which is likely the most difficult to overcome is societal attitudes. Rhodes, et al. (1991a) commented that outreach workers are constantly faced with the difficulty of trying to access services perceived as inaccessible by their clients. Bannon (1973) discussed the dilemma facing outreach workers in the inner city as whether one should try to change people or change conditions. He continued that "as an advocate, the outreach worker must drop the

impotency of the enabler and the liaison function of the broker roles and enter into conflict" (p. 38).

In his exploration of youth and poverty, Goldberg (1971) commented that community work will not have lasting results until we focus our attention from the objects of change (poor) to the agents of change. This relates to the earlier discussion about the institutionalizing of knowledge and the focus on individual rather than societal level changes. Outreach workers are therefore faced with the need to focus their efforts on many levels to encourage change within individuals, the helping professions and society.

Coping

It is not surprising that a concerted effort by outreach workers to address change at many levels may lead to difficulties coping. As in most areas of the 'helping professions', stress and burnout are common in outreach agencies. Ashery (1992) discusses several keys to offering support for outreach workers. She suggests outreach workers have weekly staff meetings in order to address any concerns that may arise and to check in with one another. Weisberg (1985) supported the suggestion of weekly staff meetings in order to share the burden and promote cohesiveness.

Other supports suggested by Ashery (1992) were: time away from the streets, access to professional counselling, team bonding opportunities, and a perceptive supervisor who is able to recognize stress patterns and provide timely support for team members. Another area touched on by Ashery (1992) was the importance for staff to have adequate training that would allow them to recognize any deficiencies in skills or

knowledge. The use of mentoring within outreach agencies was suggested as an effective method of training for outreach workers.

Vachss and Bakal (1979) discuss the need for the flow of energy to be disproportionate, and that there are potentially low rewards working with street involved youth. Weisberg (1985) discussed burnout as a common feature in outreach workers especially when dealing with adolescents involved in prostitution. Most programs involved with street youth stress that patience is required when working with this population due to the cyclical nature of addictions and the fragmentation of services. Weisberg (1985) stated that

> success stories, albeit few and far between, indicate that once a youth has developed trust with a worker, the relationship will continue for a number of years (p. 247).

Outreach workers must view their time spent with youth as an investment in the future, and avoid the temptation to view success as quantity of individuals contacted over quality of connection. In order to avoid burnout and focus on individual achievement, outreach workers must alter their definitions of success.

Keys to Success

One's idea of success is generally defined through experience, and for outreach workers it is important to understand the biases they may bring to their work. Bannon (1973) discussed the importance of not imposing our values onto youth or what he calls 'welfare colonialism', where our concerns dictate what we want to see happen for youth. Greenidge and Douglas (1973) caution that in outreach work it is important to "resist arming ourselves with predetermined concepts and values, entering a

community with the attitude that we-know-best. Such an attitude is bound to fail" (p.54).

Lewis, Lewis, Daniels and D'Andrea (1998) offered six guidelines for successful outreach to what they termed 'vulnerable populations': use all sources of client support (family, peers, friends), provide opportunities for the clients to help themselves and one another, inform clients about the nature of new roles and situations, help clients develop coping skills needed in different situations, use methods that enhance the clients' sense of control over their lives, and implement services that reflect understanding and respect for their cultural integrity and needs (p. 93).

Ashery (1992) cautioned that when doing outreach work, small successes need to be viewed as victories and this requires a positive attitude and outlook by workers. Bannon (1973) claimed that often the success of outreach programs could only be measured by the problems that do not occur. He continued that the

> major goals of a worker is to enable youth to make personal decisions more readily and positively. Workers and administration too often claim success for the number of youths reached...rather than for attitude or behavior changes (p.104).

While it is clear that success must be measured differently when working with adolescents involved in prostitution, there is also the need to be aware of the specific talents and resiliency that each adolescent has. Snell (1995) commented that "social policy that emphasizes institutionalizing street children ignores these children's strengths and resiliency" (p.14). By tapping into the strengths of youth involved in

prostitution, outreach workers are more able to achieve success as defined by the youths themselves.

Although outreach work entails many challenges, a common goal uniting agencies is the desire to promote change, whether it is at the individual, community or societal level. While the quantitative data discussed in the literature provide an understanding of elements of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution, what is missing are descriptions by the workers themselves about their experiences. By exploring the experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution, it is hoped that a better understanding of the unique issues facing workers, the effects of societal attitudes and a clearer picture of the needs of the adolescents will be achieved.

The following chapter includes a discussion of the methodology and procedure utilized in this study. This will include a general discussion of phenomenological research, including participant selection, data collection, bracketing of presuppositions and data analysis.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

In order to answer the question, "What is the experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution?", a qualitative approach was selected due to its focus on illuminating individual experience and providing rich descriptive detail. The psychological tradition has always struggled for legitimacy within the natural or 'hard' sciences. Three assumptions of the natural scientific approach as discussed by Valle and King (1978)are that the phenomenon must be: observable, measurable and agreed upon by more than one person. The difficulty for psychologists has been to balance the desire for legitimacy within the scientific paradigm with the goal of their discipline to understand the human experience. Colaizzi (1978) explored the paradox claiming that:

> if only observable, duplicable and measurable definitions have psychological validity, then a crucial dimension of the content of human psychological existence, namely, human experience, is eliminated from the study of human psychology-and this is done in the name of objectivity (p.51).

The Nature of Phenomenological Research

Within the qualitative paradigm, phenomenological inquiry focuses on the question: "What is the structure and essence of experience of this phenomenon for these people?" (Patton, 1990, p. 69). Husserl (1970) described phenomenology as a method which encourages us to contact phenomenon as we live and experience it. The phenomenon is therefore not something separate from us, or objectified by us, it is of us and we are of it. Valle and King (1978) explained that a person is viewed "as having no existence apart from the world, and the world as having no existence apart

from the persons. Each individual and his or her world are said to co-constitute one another" (p. 7).

One concept essential to the understanding of phenomenology is the *Lebenswelt* (life-world). Valle and King (1978), explained that the Lebenswelt is "both independent of knowledge derived from reflective thought processes, and yet, being prereflective (before reflective), it is also the indispensable ground or starting point for all knowledge" (p.11). The challenge for the researcher is to reveal the common structure running through several manifestations of the phenomenon. Valle and King (1978) claimed that "description through disciplined reflection, therefore replaces the experiment as method while structure replaces cause-effect relationships as the content" (p.15).

Osborne (1990) discussed how the phenomenological method shares many common elements with the counselling practice. As researchers we seek to illuminate the common structure of a phenomenon and to describe it in a way which proves interesting and valuable to others. The research interview itself has many commonalties with a therapy session: establishing rapport, communication of experience or perceptions, and an intimate interaction between two people. Within a session, the therapist seeks to understand the presenting issue, and uses past personal experience or knowledge of the issue, combined with the experience of other clients, to illuminate the underlying structure of the issue. By understanding the universal aspects of an issue or phenomenon, the client is reassured by their 'normalcy' compared to others experiencing a similar phenomenon. In fact, much of what is done within a

therapy session involves normalizing behaviors for clients and guiding them through this process of recognition.

Another key element in qualitative research that echoes how professionals locate themselves within a therapeutic tradition, is the locating of the researcher within the study. In phenomenological research, the presence of the researcher is acknowledged as unavoidable, and an attempt is made to "articulate predispositions and biases through a process of rigorous self-reflection" (Osborne, 1990, p. 81). This process is known in phenomenological research as bracketing. The researcher's purpose in bracketing is to

> bring his/her implicit knowledge of the phenomenon to an explicit level of awareness...once aware of these pre-understandings, the researcher is more able to set them aside and less likely to impose them upon the research participants (Becker, 1986, p.114).

Outlining My Presuppositions

I am interested in the experience of outreach workers who work with adolescents involved in prostitution for several reasons, all of which I hope will become clear as I bracket my presuppositions and biases on this topic. I have worked for a two and a half years in a safehouse for youth under the age of 18, who are involved or at risk of becoming involved with prostitution. During that time, I have become familiar with many of the issues that arise for individuals trying to leave the streets and create new possibilities in their lives.

As part of my role as a client support worker in a safehouse, I also have volunteered on several occasions with outreach staff on their evening street shifts.

Witnessing firsthand the beginnings of our agency's relationship with clients proved both rewarding and frustrating at times. The experience was rewarding because of the genuine caring and relationships that developed, however it was frustrating due to the cyclical nature of the addiction to the street life. In my limited exposure to outreach work, the characteristics I see as important are: accessible, non-judgmental, caring, and knowledgeable about street issues and resources in the community.

I have had many experiences within my role as client support worker which could influence what I would identify as issues surrounding involvement in prostitution. My belief about prostitution has been strongly influenced by feminist thought, and although there is not one 'feminist' view on prostitution, it is important that I locate my beliefs. It is my belief that many women and especially adolescent girls are not always aware of the ramifications of becoming involved in prostitution. There are in my view four key issues that are factors in many women's entrance into prostitution: addiction, racism, sexual abuse and gender.

In some cases, women who have become involved with prostitution do so in order to finance expensive drug habits. Drugs are often used to entice youth to accompany men who eventually assume the role of 'boyfriend', or more accurately, pimp. Although drugs may not be the only thing that draw individuals to the streets, in many instances substances are used to help them deal with the harsh reality of street life, and therefore should be viewed as survival tools. It is essential that outreach workers have a basic understanding about cycles of addiction, and an awareness of the different types of drugs available on the streets.

According to statistics, a proportionately larger percentage of Aboriginal Canadians are involved in prostitution in urban areas. This illustrates what I believe to be another factor in prostitution, institutionalized racism. Many individuals on the streets have come from homes or communities devastated by the fracturing of Aboriginal culture and traditions. This is amplified by the individual's dislocation from their network of support and disconnection with resources available in most Canadian cities. Outreach workers therefore need to be sensitive to cultural issues and be aware of resources within the Aboriginal Community that may help to address their clients' needs.

Another common issue for youth who become involved in prostitution is sexual abuse, either intrafamilial and extrafamilial victimization. From my own counselling experience with victims of sexual abuse, I am aware of a common theme of promiscuity and risky sexual behavior in many young people who have been sexually abused. There has been a tremendous amount of research on sexual abuse as predecessor to involvement in prostitution (Bagely & Young, 1987; Edney, 1992; Fields, 1990; Foti, 1994; Nadon, Koverlova & Schludermann, 1998; Rubenstein, 1990; Silbert & Pines, 1981; Seng, 1989 and Widom & Ames, 1996), however it is important to realize that correlation does not imply causation.

The cause-effect view relies on the belief that prostitution is a result of trauma, therefore further pathologizing and further marginalizing individuals who participate, many of whom have not experienced abuse before becoming involved in prostitution. Whether adolescents involved in prostitution have experienced abuse or not, outreach

workers need to be aware of the effects of trauma from past abuse issues or problems that may have developed as a result of abuse on the streets.

Finally, the issue of gender is one that illustrates itself prominently in statistics on prostitution, with the majority of prostitutes being female, and 'Johns' and pimps being male. In my view, this is tangible evidence that prostitution is a symptom of the overall subjugation of women and children to the needs of men. Another gender related issue is poverty, since women still earn less than their male counterparts in similar positions of employment, and often have less access to higher paying jobs. Along with the reality that women are more often the caregivers for children makes women more vulnerable to poverty.

I have been strongly influenced by feminist critiques of power and although I do not feel that most women would choose prostitution if more options were available, I do believe that some women choose to use their bodies for financial gain. By stating that prostitution is using your body for financial gain, it is clear that we also must look more widely at how women's bodies have been treated as a commodity by our culture, and how in many ways it is impossible to avoid 'prostituting' oneself in our society. I continue to wrestle with the debate on legalizing prostitution and yet I would like to think that in an ideal world it would not be necessary for women's or men's survival. I am aware through my own experience with a variety of staff, that not all outreach workers hold the same beliefs as me regarding the construction of prostitution, however I am unclear as to how their beliefs may influence their work with adolescents.

Participant Selection

Colaizzi (1978), discusses two criteria for selecting participants in research; experience with the investigated phenomenon and a level of articulateness. The participants selected to answer the question, "What is the experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution?", were chosen from four outreach agencies across Western Canada. In each case, the participants were contacted ahead of time in order to ensure their availability and the participation of the agency for which they were employed.

As well, the first contact allowed for a preliminary exploration of the participants' interest in the research question and willingness to openly discuss their experiences. Gender and race were not a factor in choosing participants. Two males and two females were interviewed who provided a diverse view of the experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution.

A deliberate aspect of the participant selection process was to interview outreach workers from four different agencies, in three provinces. Because legislation addressing adolescent prostitution varies between provinces, and the mandate of the agencies varies between cities, it was important to explore any shared experiences that existed despite these differences. By providing a diverse view of the phenomenon, it was hoped that any commonalties that arose in analysis would resonate with the experience of other outreach workers in Canada.

Wertz (1984) stated that the amount of participants needed depends on the number needed to illuminate the phenomenon. Becker (1986) concurred that the number of participants "depends on the quality of the interview data, as well as the

researcher's sense of its substantiality in providing a view of essential aspects of the phenomenon" (p. 106).

Although Becker (1986) discussed the importance of making the samples of participants as homogenous as possible, others (Alapack, 1973; Aanstoos, 1983; Wertz, 1984) have claimed that heterogeneity among participants allows a greater generalizability and stronger likelihood of illuminating the essential structure of the phenomenon. The participants illustrated diverse life experiences and the agencies they worked for were variable.

Data Collection: The Interviews

The data utilized in this study were collected through the use of phenomenological interviews completed over a period of one month. Patton (1990) wrote that "qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" (p.278). The face-to-face interview format helps to create an environment that enables this assumption to be proven accurate.

Data collection proceeded in the following three steps as outlined in Osborne (1990) and Becker (1986): structuring the interview and establishing rapport with the participant, a data gathering interview, and a follow-up corroborative interview after data analysis neared completion. During the initial orienting interview, ethical issues such as informed consent, confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study at any time, were explained to the participant. When possible, the orienting interview involved personal contact with the participants, however when this was not possible, an

orienting phone call, followed by a facsimile served to inform the participant of the study.

A study description and letter of introduction (see Appendix A), were given to the participants and a consent form was signed (see Appendix B). The participants were also given a copy of the ethics form obtained from the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta, and I encouraged them to think about their experiences in outreach work for the next interview. This initial interaction also allowed participants to inquire further about the research process and for me to inform them of my background and interest in the topic. This interaction proved valuable in establishing rapport with participants and increasing their comfort level with the process. Osborne (1990) stated that "good rapport between the researcher and co-researcher is crucial...and that "unless rapport and trust are established the researcher is unlikely to get authentic descriptions of a co-researcher's experience" (p. 84).

Interviewing was conducted in a semi-structured format. A number of items were compiled in an interview guide that isolated aspects of the phenomenon. The items isolated in this initial phase of the process were: background before outreach work, duties of the position, contextual factors, coping methods, impact on self, definitions of success, views of what adolescents involved in prostitution want for their lives and demographic information from the participant. Colaizzi (1978, p.58), posited that the success of questions will depend on "the extent that they tap the subjects' experiences of the phenomenon as distinct from their theoretical knowledge of it".

Interviewing occurred within the workplace environment utilizing a setting which minimized interruptions. The interview guide used required standardized

questions, however it also allowed the participants the freedom to converse at an informal level. Patton (1990) claimed that the advantage of an interview guide was that it made good use of the time provided for the interview, kept interactions focused, and allowed individual experiences to emerge.

The four data gathering interviews ranged in length from 45 to 75 minutes. The interviews concluded when all isolated aspects of the phenomenon were covered and when the participants felt that they had spoken fully of their experience as outreach workers with adolescents involved in prostitution. To facilitate analysis of the data an audio recording of the interview was made with consent of the participants and transcribed at a later time. Attention was paid during transcription and analysis to the participant's rate of speech, level of comfort with the questions and any emphasis that may have been placed through tone of voice.

The final phase of the interview process was the corroborative interview, or what Kvale (1983) describes as the 'Self-Corrective Interview". The purpose of this part of the interview process was to offer each participant a summary of the researcher's interpretive portrayal of their experience. The participants had the opportunity to correct misinterpretations, add further elaboration on their experience or confirm the accuracy of the descriptions.

Becker (1986) wrote that "the ultimate test of the quality of the data is whether the researcher can produce substantial insight into the phenomenon from the analysis of the data." (p. 118). All but one of the corroborative interviews occurred over the phone, and allowed the participants to comment on the structural descriptions of their experience. In general, the participants felt that the descriptions accurately captured

their experience. Suggestions were given to elaborate excerpts that seemed incomplete or awkward in wording, and the participant's input was included in the final presentation of the study.

Data Analysis

The research methodology followed in this study is a blending of two styles developed by Colaizzi (1978) and Osborne (1990). Following the above steps for data collection, the interviews were transcribed yielding the protocol. It is important at this point to take time to "get a feel for the data" (Osborne, 1990) by reading the protocol several times. The next step is what Colaizzi (1978) described as extracting significant statements. This required identifying excerpts from the original protocol that would illuminate aspects of the participant's experience, eliminating any repetitious phrases. Any identifying information in the excerpts was removed in order to maintain participant anonymity and confidentiality.

The next phase described by Colaizzi (1978) as "formulating meaning" involved creating a bridge between the participant's initial protocol and more abstract themes. This bridge is anchored in the original words of the participant, yet required that the researcher illustrate insight about what the participant actually meant in their statements. An example of this process for each participant can be seen in Appendices E, H, K, and N. First order themes are then clustered into what Osborne refers to as 'higher-order clusters', or second order themes. These second order themes are represented in tabular form, or expanded in a written synthesis (see Appendices D, G, J and M). In order to maintain confidentiality, the description of the experiences of the participants are summarized according to the themes that arose during analysis.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter contains the description of the interviews with each of the four participants. The description will include a presentation of the themes evolving from the participant's experience, as well as a discussion of the themes shared by all four outreach workers. Each individual theme will be preceded by a quotation from the original transcript, which offers insight into how the participants interpreted their experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution. Although it is generally necessary in this section to include a discussion of personal information on the participants, it was felt that due to the limited number of outreach workers in Western Canada the participant's confidentiality would not have been maintained.

Richard's Experience

Negative Perceptions of the Helping Profession

"When you see schools, you know, turn these kids away because they're prostitutes, that's really hard to swallow, and that makes you bitter."

Richard's experience of outreach work has entailed many struggles. He feels people enter the 'helping profession' for the wrong reasons; with a 'save the world attitude' and assumptions that they know what is best for youth. Richard has developed a bitter and cynical attitude towards the 'helping profession' because of what he believes is the hypocrisy of society's approach towards youth involved in prostitution.

Richard has experienced many illustrations of the hypocrisy with which society approaches the issue of prostitution. He has witnessed professionals working with adolescents during the day, while in the evenings they are picking up youth for the

purposes of prostitution. He has advocated for youth to be included in schools only to have the schools refuse their entry due to the youth's involvement in prostitution. Richard feels that although society views youth involved in prostitution as victims, we continually treat them like criminals by marginalizing them and then creating laws that limit their freedom as individuals.

Richard believes that we often re-victimize youth by removing them from what they know and expecting them to fit into the helping system. The result is that helping professionals tend to pathologize youth involved in prostitution rather than caring for them. Richard feels bitterness towards the system that he views as antiquated and unable to meets the needs of youth. Richard feels that Native children in particular, but all youth involved in prostitution, have become an industry due to the increasing public awareness of children's involvement in prostitution. He views service providers as benefiting from the increased funding that has been allocated to address the issue of child prostitution in Canada.

Role in Outreach

> "People don't like to move very fast and people like to put up lots of barriers... we don't like barriers and we try to push them. So if you're... trying to access services you have to spin... seriously, there's not a day that's gone by that we're not spinning"

Richard perceives his role in outreach as an advocate for youth involved in prostitution. He feels his life experiences have been more beneficial for his role in outreach than any academic opportunities he has had. When he first started working in

the outreach program he experienced others questioning his role with youth because of his race and gender.

Richard credits the variability in outreach work as the reason he has stayed so long in his position. He perceives a lack of funding as necessitating a hands-on approach, which he views as unlike many other programs in which most of the workers are behind their desks. Richard perceives himself as dogmatic in ensuring his clients access to services. He feels that there are many barriers to overcome, and that it is necessary to 'spin' in order to achieve results.

Richard compared his relationship with co-workers to a marriage because of the amount of time spent together, and he believes there are just as many ups and downs in their relationships as a result. Richard commented that at times he feels he is losing his drive and as a result he has begun to question himself in his role. Despite all of the difficulties of working in outreach, Richard sees the adolescents themselves as the reason for his continued employment.

Keys to Connecting with Youth

> "You measure success in, in millimetres you know. So a kid comes in today and she's alive, well that's a success. She came in without a black-eye, well that's a, another success."

Richard identified the key to connecting with youth is to be perceived as the 'good guy', and never the 'bad guy'; the one to call when youth find themselves in trouble. He discussed the need to work outside of the mandated age group in order to connect with youth since adults involved in prostitution facilitate the contact between adolescents and outreach. He also believes that adults involved in prostitution are

victims as well as the youth, however he does not understand why society views the issues differently. Richard thinks measuring success in millimetres is crucial in outreach work.

Understanding the Needs of Youth

"The van is like their van. This program is their program...the only reason it has expanded the way it has is because they've asked for it"

Richard believes that adolescents involved in prostitution should be treated with love, tenderness, kindness and understanding. He feels that too often service providers are willing to offer advice, rather than asking the adolescents what they want. Richard views youth as the experts of their experience and feels they should be listened to before any decisions are made that affect their lives. He feels that services are utilized when made accessible to youth, and that their program has expanded in order to address the needs of clients. Richard believes that youth desire something to believe in and that it is important to offer opportunities for youth to succeed and help others. Richard perceives helping others as healing for both clients and outreach workers.

Effects on Self

"It's made me more appreciative of my own family...It's made me realize that I'm doing a good job at home, 'cause my kids aren't out there"

Richard has been deeply affected by witnessing children the same age as his own involved in prostitution. He and his family have extended themselves for youth in times of crisis in order to keep them safe. Richard sees himself as losing his drive and questioning himself in his role. Witnessing how youth become involved in prostitution has made him more appreciative of his family and the way he has raised his children.

He feels the fact his children are not on the streets is recognition of his own competency as a parent. Richard enjoys spending time with his children and filling their lives with what he was not given as a child. He credits his children with creating a bridge between the world of work and home.

Laura's Experience

Role in Outreach

> "The work is so intimate and personal... there's a lot of trauma that we see, I think we depend on each other for more support than we would if we were working in a field where we weren't exposed to as much [of]... life's horrible things"

Laura perceives her role in outreach as a 'jack of all trades'; a direct service provider, community collaborator and educator. She thinks that others perceive her as someone who is dogmatic in search of services for her clients. The agency she works for had a rotating leader which she viewed as a direct result of the intense nature of outreach work. However, following the growth of the agency, she claimed a single leader was necessary in order to ensure funding and completion of outreach duties.

Laura viewed the most important part of her role in outreach as the relationship development with her clients. She believes that she extends herself as she would in any friendship, in order to establish equality in the relationship with clients. Although she feels that extending herself may have resulted in the crossing of professional boundaries, she added that she believes it was necessary in order to develop successful connections with her clients.

Keys to Connecting with Youth

"When I hear that 'I' statements, that 'I feel', you know there's goodness in that. To me that's success. Not the numbers. I think it's that quality that the person feels that they have."

Laura views offering basic needs to her clients as a sign that her agency cares about what happens to individuals involved in prostitution. She feels that an outreach worker must avoid judging or lecturing their clients to facilitate relationships. Laura believes that small measurements of success are essential in outreach work, and described an important indicator of success as the use of 'I' statements by clients. Laura perceives that it is the quality a person feels that indicates success rather than the quantity of individuals reached by their services.

Understanding the Needs of Youth

"Initially there are a lot of biases because if they were, if you were a prostitute then you didn't have for some reason as much right to get the services that you needed"

Laura views her agency as expanding according to the needs of the clients. She feels that during the initial stages of the program there was a great need for education in the community, especially with service providers who held biases against individuals involved in prostitution. Laura described her approach with clients as a fine balance, where she was careful not to judge or lecture individuals involved in prostitution.

Effects on Self

"It fascinated me. It also scared me. It also taught me um a lot of things and also showed me that there was so much more that I needed to know and learn, just about the human condition"

Laura has had many different experiences in her role as an outreach worker that have influenced her as a professional, as an individual, and as a woman. Despite feeling she "knew everything", Laura realized that nothing could have prepared her enough for working with individuals involved in prostitution. She was fascinated, and scared by what she experienced in her role, and she realized how much more there was to know about the human condition.

Laura's role in outreach has led to spiritual questioning of "Why her and why not me?" She is sometimes puzzled by what she views as the chance nature of how a person's life evolves. She believes her role has led to a better appreciation of what she has been given in life when compared to others who have not been as fortunate. Laura believes that working with individuals involved in prostitution has made her a better person, however she struggled to articulate the intangibles aspects of her experience.

Laura feels that as a result of her work in outreach, she is better able to truly listen to people talk about their experiences. She has made fundamental changes in her life and feels that this is a result of her need for integrity between the advice she gives to clients and how she lives her life. She has developed stronger boundaries between home and work, and relies on activities that allow her to tap her creative skills to solidify this division. Laura feels proud and privileged to have the opportunity to work with the clients of her agency.

Cathy's Experience

Role in Outreach

"People that I've worked with that have become frustrated with the job tended not to pay attention to small successes, they only looked for the big successes which may be few and far between."

Cathy views her role within the outreach team as a resource. She believes that initially she was more willing to tell people what they needed to do rather than using the opportunity to provide a learning experience for them. She now perceives her role as a "teacher not a teller", and feels that having new people join the outreach team has allowed her to continue learning.

Cathy credits her longevity to her ability to view small measurements of success with youth involved in prostitution. Cathy sees some individuals come into the role with a 'save the world attitude' that she feels is bound to fail. She perceives the utilization of services by youth is a sign of a successful intervention, and feels that others in her profession become burnt out because they view the cyclical nature of their clients involvement in prostitution as too frustrating.

Keys to Connecting

"I don't own their successes and I'm not going to own their failures either. And that way you are able to do your job."

Cathy perceives her primary role in outreach is to engage youth, and to create a safe and nurturing relationship. She feels that this relationship provides a foundation upon which youth are able to build future choices. Cathy believes that her sense of humour and ability to make others feel relaxed are key to engaging the youth she works

with. Cathy recognized staff diversity as important for connecting with a variety of youth involved in prostitution. She believes the reason some workers fail is because they try to own the successes or failures of their clients. Cathy views her agency's success as due in part to the limited number of clients that are able to visit at one time. She claims that the low numbers of clients allow for more individual attention and an emphasis on quality not quantity.

Understanding the Needs of Youth

> "I found that whole subculture of the street just interesting...to know like children escape from oppressive homes to enter the street which is in some ways, it has just as many rules and is just as oppressive"

Cathy views street-involved youth as relying on their intuition for survival and feels she has developed this skill as well through her work with this population. She feels that youth need to be able to understand their destructive patterns in order to be able to move past them and onto other challenges. She thinks that often service providers are quick to get youth into programs without having them deal with issues that have sabotaged them in the past. Cathy is interested in street subculture, and why youth escape from oppressive homes to become entrenched in a culture that has just as many rules and is just as oppressive.

Cathy believes that youth deserve respectful confrontation of issues and she does not think that it is appropriate to have youth open themselves up to her without being able to work through what they have revealed. She tries to ensure that the youth is prepared to explore painful issues, and that the necessary supports are available afterwards. Cathy recognizes that the issue of confidentiality on the street can be a

matter of life and death and it is important to ensure a clients' safety before entering into a conversation. She perceives that youth visit the program because they want to engage with others, they want to try to understand their situations. Cathy credits the interaction with staff as the reason youth utilize the services of her agency, that youth would go elsewhere if all they wanted was the basic services.

Effects on Self

> "So how it's affecting me, I guess it's my 'rose colored glasses' are totally off and some days I wish that they were on."

Cathy feels that the longer she works in outreach, the stricter her boundaries have become between work and home. She feels that she has had to increase this skill at creating boundaries in order to be able to contain everything she witnesses during her work day. She re-energizes herself by pursuing activities that allow her to spend time alone, shut her brain off and restore quiet. Cathy believes that it is important to have healthy relationships in her personal life and for her to have integrity between her advice to clients and how she lives.

Cathy perceives advantages and disadvantages to having her 'rose colored glasses' removed. She describes her work in outreach as rewarding but at times it is a burden that can be hard on her soul. Cathy feels privileged to connect with a population she views as 'hard to reach'. She enjoys being seen as an advocate, and constantly using her mind and social skills. She also enjoys the counselling aspects of her role and the interesting things she encounters working on the street with youth.

Bryan's Experiences

Role in Outreach

"The first time before I even knew anyone, I was really, I was shunned basically from, from trying to access them in any way... they had strict orders not to talk to anybody else that is male."

Bryan viewed his race and gender as being a barrier to working with youth involved in prostitution. He perceives his experiences outside of the scholastic setting as the most valuable to prepare him for his role. The qualities Bryan viewed as important in outreach were personal character, patience, and an open mind to other people's experiences. He felt that the agency he works for offered youth educational opportunities through workshops and counselling and this is what drew him to his present position.

Bryan described his role as ensuring that services for clients were not disrupted despite staffing shortages in his agency. He feels that since the program has grown, there has been less time for debriefing among staff members, and this has affected the team concept. Bryan values the training offered in his role in outreach because it has provided opportunities for personal growth. This training has led to better coping skills and an increased competency in his role. Bryan feels that he needs to leave his outreach position and be in a role where he will see more tangible results.

<u>Keys to Connecting</u>

"Choices, I give them as many as I can, as many good choices as I can for them. Um the decision is theirs, and I let them know that too... and I think it helps them."

Bryan sees the keys to connecting with youth are listening and hearing what they have to say. He feels that his own experiences may help him provide an

understanding of what someone else is experiencing. Bryan perceives diversity in the outreach staff aids connections with youth and facilitates learning for other workers. He feels his own approach towards youth has become more subtle since he started working for the program and that this approach allows youth to initiate contact.

Bryan views offering positive choices to youth as essential, and making it known to them that they control the decisions. Bryan believes that further crises are avoided by offering youth choices and requiring they take time to think. He mentioned that it was important to recognize youth's achievements, whether large or small. When he hears youth saying that they would like to work with other youth, he feels this is a sign that their program is succeeding at some level.

Understanding the Needs of Youth

"Whatever the demand is we try to meet it um because a lot of times that, we can use that tool to... establish some kind of rapport with them."

Bryan recognizes that meeting the demands of youth leads to the establishment of rapport. He feels that this is important in the development of relationships, and increasing trust of outreach workers by youth. He views engaging youth as key to understanding their needs. He also views his role as informing youth of services, and offering referrals. Bryan perceives the relationship that develops between worker and client as providing youth with accountability. He thinks youth involved in prostitution may have lacked positive nurturing and have sought out attention from others who are willing to offer it to them. He feels that it is essential to let youth make changes when they are ready.

Effects on Self

"I've probably hit too many barriers to, try to push past that... with the legislation, with police uh and with other things that we just can't control like the street element... it can become dangerous in a second... and sometimes I feel like I don't want to put myself in that situation anymore."

Bryan has developed many negative feelings as a result of the cycle of violence that street youth are involved in. He has found it frustrating when little is done to have the perpetrators of violence face the consequences of their actions. He has experienced dangerous situations while working at outreach where he felt that he put his clients' safety above his own. Bryan feels he has become more sensitive towards exploitation within relationships, and feels his increased awareness has influenced his relationships with others. He acknowledged the importance of integrity between his words and his actions.

To balance his work at outreach, Bryan uses his free time wisely. He discussed the need to have a strong boundary between work and home, and to have activities that free his mind from thinking about work. Bryan tries to "root himself" by spending time with his children and he feels he gives them increased respect as a result of his work with youth involved in prostitution. Recently, Bryan has felt that he has hit too many barriers and that he may not want to continue putting himself at risk in his role at outreach.

Shared Experience

There were four themes shared by all participants, and one theme which was specific to Richard's experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution. The four shared themes were Aspects of Role, Keys to Connecting with

Youth, Understanding the Needs of Youth, and Effects on Self. The unique theme in Richard's experience was Negative Perceptions of Helping Profession.

Negative Perceptions of Helping Profession

The theme of Negative Perceptions of Helping Profession was unique to Richard's experience and may have been influenced by personal experience as well as his experiences as an outreach worker. It is Richard's belief that helping professionals do not always have the best interest of youth in mind when making decisions. He feels that professionals too often pathologize rather than help youth. An illustration of Richard's frustration with helping professionals can be seen below.

> We talked about re-victimizing kids all the time but if you're [helping professionals] not gonna be there to do it [offer accessible services] then leave the bloody kids alone because they're a lot safer on the streets with what they know and how they survived for all those number of years and we bring to this environment [service agency] and say "Well we're going to try to help you make your life better", and maybe that's why I'm so cynical about things is because you see it over and over and over and over again

Richard feels cynical about what he sees as the hypocrisy with which many people approach the issue of prostitution. He sees this in many facets of his work when youth are continually marginalized by a system that is funded to help adolescents involved in prostitution. He believes that an industry has been generated by public concern for youth involved in prostitution, and that often it is the youths that are forgotten.

Role in Outreach

The theme of the Role in Outreach varied for each participant. Richard and Laura viewed themselves as dogmatic in the search for services for their clients. They discussed how this determination was necessary in order to overcome biases in the community and a general reluctance to serve individuals who had been involved in prostitution. This is illustrated in the excerpt below:

> My role was, was the person that did a lot of the community work, and that was networking with other agencies, other individuals to get services in place you know for the people we serve... I think for some people I've been a bit of a pain in the butt in my role, um 'cause I think if there's a service or something that we need I've been fairly dogmatic and just whatever and, and trying to get it.

Bryan also mentioned the difficulty he experienced in his role because of the barriers created by the legal system and police.

Each participant except Laura discussed how their lives previous to working in outreach had been important in preparing them for their role. Richard mentioned that his life experience had been more valuable than any book knowledge. Cathy discussed her previous work experience with youth in a different setting made the shift to outreach a new challenge. Bryan also had previous experience with youth, and his desire to extend services led him to his role in outreach work. Despite her past work with other marginalized populations, Laura in many ways felt unprepared for her role in outreach.

Richard, Laura, and Cathy described their role as involving a multitude of duties and skills. Laura seemed to capture this view by describing herself as a 'jack of all trades'. Each participant stressed the need to engage youth, and the overall

importance of the relationship building process. Cathy and Richard both discussed how they enjoyed their role as advocates for youth and liked the fact that they did not have to play the 'bad guy' role.

Bryan and Richard perceived their race and gender as a barrier to their work with young females involved in prostitution. Richard felt that the barrier existed initially with youth and with other professionals who did not view his involvement as appropriate. Bryan also discussed how assumptions were made by others about his role and that it took time to change people's perceptions of his motives.

Richard compared his relationships with co-workers to a marriage, and claimed there were similar ups and downs as a result of the closeness. Laura believed that the intimate nature of the work led to close relationships with co-workers. Although Cathy mentioned that she had good relationships with co-workers, she tended to not see them outside of the work environment. Bryan recognized that he had different relationships with each co-worker, however he viewed the growth of the agency and subsequent decreased opportunity for debriefing had affected his closeness with individuals.

Keys to Connecting

The theme of Keys to Connecting captured the participants beliefs about what they perceived as important in connecting with youth. The participants agreed that definitions of success needed to be altered when working with youth involved in prostitution. Richard discussed the importance of measuring success in millimetres, while Laura gave specific examples of what success meant to her. Cathy mentioned the importance of not owning the successes or failures of clients and felt her own longevity was due in part to her ability to interpret success as unique to each client's

circumstances. Bryan stressed the importance of acknowledging youth's achievements and the need to work at the client's pace. His interpretation of success and how he views it in clients is demonstrated by the following excerpt:

> I've had to actually almost remove that word from, from my vocabulary because it'd be almost setting myself up, or setting, setting the youth I'm working with up um. That's a difficult, that's a difficult uh thing to measure. Because of the cycles uh they go through, because of the issues they may or may not tackle um while you're working with them... So you know, you take it one, one thing at a time, whether it be one day or one week or... one experience or an issue. So whatever it is you know and uh just, just um, just uh acknowledge their achievements.

Despite the difficulty in measuring success, Richard and Bryan felt that youth aspiring to work with youth was a sign of a successful intervention.

Each participant discussed the need to respect their clients, however they differed in the manner in which they accorded respect to youth. Richard referred to youth as experts of their own experience, while Laura tried to establish equality in her relationships with clients. Cathy viewed respectful confrontation of issues with youth as essential in order to ensure their health and safety. Bryan offered positive choices to youth and assured them that the decisions are theirs to make.

Finally Bryan and Cathy viewed staff diversity as playing an important role in connecting with a wide range of youth. They mentioned that they did not expect all youth to connect with them as individuals and with the type of approach they used.

They welcomed the opportunity to learn from others as a result of the diversity of staff members.

Understanding the Needs of Youth

The theme of Understanding the Needs of Youth represented attempts by participants to articulate what youth involved in prostitution require from outreach workers. The agencies that the participants are employed by offer various services to address the basic needs of clients. Richard and Bryan commented that offering food provides a tool for connecting with youth in a non-threatening way, and helps to build trusting relationships. Laura felt that offering basic necessities to clients was a sign that her agency cared about them, and she felt this could help facilitate relationship building. Cathy viewed providing for a client's basic needs also played a role in engaging youth, however she felt that another key part addressing the needs of youth was respectful confrontation of issues. Her approach is captured below:

> I'm always looking at stirring something up but in a respectful way. Like I think it's very disrespectful for me to work my little you know 8 hour job, come in, stir shit up with somebody and walk away and go home to a safe place, and have them upset that they spilled their guts talking about whatever.

An important feature of the agencies was that their services were located in close proximity to youth. Richard felt this was key to having the services utilized and discussed the failure of a specific program when services were relocated. Laura and Richard also believed that the growth of their agencies was a direct result of the increasing awareness of client needs.

Effect on Self

Finally, the theme of Effects on Self was explored in depth by each participant during the course of their interview. All four participants had been profoundly influenced by their experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution. Richard and Bryan believed that because of their work in outreach, they had developed a more respectful parenting style and they expressed appreciation of their children as children. Children were seen by the men as a bridge between work and home and it was apparent that these relationships were highly valued. Laura also mentioned that for her, the role of mother helped her to maintain a clear boundary between work and home because her roles were so different.

Another common effect on self was the tendency to view society with a more cynical attitude. Cathy discussed how her experiences as an outreach worker with youth involved in prostitution had forced the removal of her 'rose-colored glasses'. This has led to a heightened awareness of exploitation within relationships, and what she perceives as an extra burden on her soul. Although Cathy acknowledges there are advantages and disadvantages to her increased awareness, she feels it is better to be informed about issues than to be oblivious of them.

Richard's cynicism was discussed earlier and tended to be directed more towards helping professionals. Bryan also experienced an increased awareness of exploitation within relationships, and sensitivity towards the way people treat one another. Laura seemed to be influenced in the opposite direction in that she discussed how fortunate she was to have had a healthy family and good friendships. She

acknowledged the ugliness of what she witnesses as an outreach worker, but she also is appreciative of the resiliency of the human spirit to overcome obstacles.

The most significant commonality in the experiences of the outreach workers was a belief that one must live with integrity between their words and their actions, or how they live their lives. Cathy discussed how she felt it was important to have healthy relationships in her personal life. Laura made significant changes in her life in order to live with integrity. She credits working in outreach with forcing her to make changes that may not have occurred. Bryan discussed his increased awareness to exploitation in other relationships, but he also applied this to his own relationships as well. An example of one of the participants discussion how the need for integrity was revealed to them can be seen below.

> As a result of trying to encourage women to make some positive changes in their life, that reflected on me and my own personal life and um that stared me in the face...and I thought boy, I need to make some personal changes in my life... And I don't know if that would have happened eventually, or if it ever would have happened, but I, I know it stared me in the face every night going to work

Bryan, Laura and Richard discussed that they had extended themselves for clients that were in a crisis situation. Richard had opened the doors to his home for youth whose lives were in danger. Laura believed that she had extended herself beyond professional boundaries, however she felt this was necessary in the process of relationship building. Bryan mentioned putting the clients' safety above his own in

certain volatile situations, but he also felt that he no longer wanted to take the same risks in the future.

Each participant mentioned the need for the balance in their personal lives. Richard mentioned taking some time to play with his children. Laura used creative expression and the support system of family and friends to provide balance. Cathy spent time with her pets in order to clear her mind and re-energize herself. Bryan took time with his children as well as played sports that required him to focus his mind and exert himself physically.

There was also agreement on the need for a clear boundary between work and home, although the participants achieved this in different ways. Laura described strong boundaries as a skill, and mentioned that her role as a mother made the boundary very clear for her. Cathy also discussed how her skill at creating boundaries developed progressively during her employment, resulting in the need to compartmentalize conversations about work while she was at home.

Richard described the need for clear boundaries, however his demanding role and dedication to his position had resulted in some feelings of being burnt out. He acknowledged that he had not done enough self-care activities recently and was feeling the effects of his negligence. Bryan discussed the need for clear boundaries between work and home however, he appeared to desire a change in role because of his need to see more results of his work.

Listening Beyond the Words

There were several things expressed by the participants non-verbally that may not have been captured in the discussion of their experiences. The emotion displayed

by participants during the interviews ranged from anger to laughter. It was apparent that the participants' lives had been fundamentally changed because of their work with adolescents in prostitution. When asked how their work had affected them personally, the participants each sighed and paused in order to reflect on how to articulate their experience. It was apparent from their reactions that their experience of outreach work with individuals involved in prostitution had fundamentally altered their world views.

The language used during the course of the interviews was emotionally charged and contained many metaphors. Interestingly, some examples of metaphors are used by different participants to illustrate diverse elements of their experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution. Richard used the phrase "starting fires" to describe how he is dogmatic in his search for services for his clients. Bryan on the other hand, used the phrase "putting out fires" in order to describe the crisis intervention mode often apparent in outreach work.

Cathy described the process of exploring issues in a respectful way with clients as "stirring", however Richard used this metaphor to describe how he attempted to encourage change in the way services were offered to his clients. Another metaphor Cathy used was "planting seeds", which also referred to her approach with clients and her subtle confrontation of issues with youth.

While it is clear that there are many aspects of the outreach workers' experiences that the participants share, each person has offered different interpretations of their experience and how they have been influenced by their work. The elements that are common to each participants experience are: need for integrity between work

and home, strong boundaries between work and home, fundamental changes in self as a result of outreach work, and the importance of altering definitions of success.

In Chapter 5, a more general discussion of the important findings of the study will be completed, as well as a comment on the limitations of phenomenological research. Following this is an exploration of the implications for counsellors and others in the helping professions who may serve individuals involved in prostitution. Also included will be suggestions for outreach workers of issues that may be considered in their work and a presentation of thoughts on future research based on missing aspects in the literature.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a general discussion of the significant findings from the study will be presented and integrated into the literature explored in Chapter 2. The discussion will follow the themes that emerged from the experiences of the participants, and will focus on one key aspect within each theme that is significant in the study. This will be followed in each theme by an exploration of the implications of the findings for outreach workers.

Next the limitations of the study and of the phenomenological method will be discussed. The chapter continues with an examination of the implications for counsellors and others who offer services to marginalized populations, focusing on the agencies addressing the needs of individuals involved in prostitution. Finally a summary of the implications for outreach workers will be offered followed by suggestions for future research.

Negative Perceptions of Helping Profession

Although the theme of Negative Perceptions of Helping Profession was not shared by all participants, it was felt that some of the aspects of Richard's experience of required further elaboration. There are three interrelated issues that will be discussed in this section, the construction of social problems, the disease view of individuals involved in prostitution and the institutionalizing of knowledge.

One of the comments made by Richard which was illustrative of the discussion on the construction of social problems in the literature review was that an industry had been created to address the issue of adolescent involvement in prostitution. Because

outreach with individuals in prostitution has significant client overlap with HIV outreach and both forms evolved out of health and social problems intervention models with marginalized populations, the disease or medical model became the paradigm from which prostitution was viewed. In their discussion of health education, Brown and Margo (1978) reasoned that by focusing on the disease model, or the pathologizing of individuals, efforts were diverted from the consideration of "social conditions and social structure as causes of social and health problems." (p. 5)

The above discussion was supported by Lerum (1999) who wrote that when ideas become institutionalized, the focus shifts from changing institutions to changing individuals. Gusfield (1989) commented that movements addressing social problems eventually develop into industries with their own agendas, thus further marginalizing the populations defined as 'the problem'. Through the institutionalizing of youth prostitution, the focus has been diverted from encouraging change in societal attitudes and public policy to encouraging change in youth.

What can be done to address these concerns? Lerum (1999) wrote:

> the less anchored people are in their community and extended family, the less they can rely on unconditional help, and the more they have to either pay for it or conduct campaigns to convince people that they are worthy of help. (p. 16)

Outreach workers and youth involved in prostitution receive assistance partly because of campaigns that have been initiated to address child prostitution. Encouraging connections with communities, and addressing issues within families may play a role in preventing adolescents' entrance into prostitution by anchoring them in their surroundings. Outreach workers are key players in facilitating these connections by

building trusting relationships with youth who have been viewed as 'hard to reach', and addressing their needs as individuals while working towards change at a societal level.

Role in Outreach

The outreach workers discussed many of the barriers mentioned in the literature. Evaluations of other outreach organizations in the literature revealed the need to advocate on the part of clients with service providers and individuals in the community. Two of the workers discussed the need to be dogmatic in advocating for their clients and searching for services. There was a constant struggle to access existing services, as well as to create services that addressed the needs of their clients. The difficulty in some organizations arose when the priorities of clients were superceded by the priorities of management.

Rhodes, et al. (1991a) discussed the clash between voluntary and statutory boards. In the organization evaluated in this study, the statutory board wanted the clients needs to be addressed through existing services. The voluntary board, including outreach workers, wanted to advocate for new services to be created that would more adequately address the concerns of their clients. Most outreach agencies rely on government grants and outside funding. The reliance especially on government funding can be problematic when public agendas clash with the best interest of outreach clients. This brings up the evaluation issue of "Who is the client?", or whose needs are addressed by the services. Outreach workers and outreach agencies must keep in mind who they are advocating for. If the clients of outreach are adolescents involved in prostitution, then a bottom up approach is recommended that requires consultation with stakeholders, community change through collective action, and an

attempt to bring about social change. The advantage of this approach is that it facilitates the empowerment of individuals.

If the clients are governments or other outside stakeholders, then a top down approach is recommended which relies on the assumption that once provided the information, change will be initiated at the level of the individual. The problem with a top down approach was described by Brown and Margo (1978) who stated that often the workers

> became the technicians who planned and implemented social changes approved by funding agencies or individuals who were often far removed from the 'target communities' (p. 7)

If the role of the outreach worker is to build relationships with youth involved in prostitution, then it is necessary for youths concerns to be at the forefront. Through consultation with youth involved in prostitution it is more likely that their needs are addressed rather than pursuing the agendas of others far removed from the situation at hand. This issue will be explored further in the next section discussing the concept of success in outreach work.

Keys to Connecting

One of the significant findings under the theme of Keys to Connecting was how success was defined by the participants. Definitions of success are important at both the individual and programmatic level. At the level of the individual, participants expressed the need to acknowledge success based upon individual circumstances. At the program level, Rhodes, et al. (1991a) discussed how evaluation of outreach agencies is a difficult prospect because of the contrasting expectations of statutory and

voluntary boards. Therefore defining an outreach agency's success depends upon who is defining what 'success' is, and what are the units of analysis.

A key finding common to the participants' experience of outreach work was the need for altered definitions of success with marginalized populations. In the literature review, Bannon (1973) explored outreach work in inner cities, and he used the term 'welfare colonialism' to describe the imposition of service providers values on individuals accessing programs. Greenidge and Douglas (1973) cautioned that in outreach work it is important to resist using predetermined concepts and values, or an attitude that we-know-best, for it is bound to fail.

By imposing their values on clients, outreach workers and other service providers also impose their definitions of success, which becomes problematic for both client and service provider if the individual seeking assistance is not able to meet these expectations. One of the participants described what is important is the quality that an individual feels, not the quantity. This has repercussions in evaluation at the individual and agency level. For outreach workers it was important to focus on the individual and their perception of achievement or success in the context of their lives to facilitate understanding and needs assessment. At the agency level, there must be an awareness that numbers of adolescents leaving the streets cannot be the sole indication of successful interventions.

Lewis, Lewis, Daniels and D'Andrea (1998) offered six guidelines for successful outreach to what they termed 'vulnerable populations'. These included utilizing all sources of client support, providing opportunities for the clients to help themselves and one another, informing clients about the nature of new roles and

situations, helping clients develop coping skills needed in different situations, using methods that enhance the clients' sense of control over their lives, and implementing services that reflect understanding and respect for their cultural integrity and needs (p. 93). By using this outline as a guide, outreach workers are more likely to achieve success as defined by the individuals involved in prostitution.

Understanding the Needs of Youth

One way to truly address the needs of youth is to have them more actively involved in the development of services. As Richard commented, "youth are the experts on youths", and it is important for governments and agencies serving street youth to initiate this dialogue. One such effort to have the needs of youth involved in prostitution articulated was organized at the Leaving the Streets Forum to Address the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth Conference in Vancouver in March of 2000.

Some of the recommendations from the conference include recognition of age discrimination as harmful, wider community involvement in the mentoring of youth, recognition of post traumatic stress in sexually exploited youth, and increased funding for long-term transition housing (for a complete list of the demands of youth participants see Appendix P).

At another recent conference held in Edmonton, youth advocate Cherry Kingsley summarized the needs of youth involved in prostitution as: prevention, harm reduction (including outreach, transition housing, drug treatment, and counselling), exiting and healing opportunities, change in public attitudes, and youth participation. She discussed that street involved youth are a symptom of the disease of society,

therefore implying that the focus needs to be on societal changes rather than on pathologizing youth. Her final statement to the audience was that youth are "counting on you that you will reflect a sense of our worth... by creating an environment where we are visible" (Kinglsey, 2000). By advocating for youth and making them the experts of their experiences, outreach workers help to create an environment that makes youth visible.

Effects on Self

In the review of the literature, there were many characteristics considered desirable for outreach workers. Ashery (1992) described the need for workers to be credible and capable of establishing trust. Other characteristics mentioned were open, honest and forthright. Despite the list of desirable characteristics however, personal integrity was not mentioned in any previous discussions. Another key finding of this study therefore, was the consensus that personal integrity is important for outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution.

Personal integrity as represented by the participants was striving to live their lives with consistency between their words and their actions. This was manifested in their relationships with their partners and their children, and it increased their awareness of exploitation in the relationships of others in society. The increased awareness to exploitation within relationships was seen as both an advantage and disadvantage for workers. The disadvantage was that workers found themselves hypersensitive to any forms of abuse or exploitation by others even when it may not exist, and this was described as an extra burden. The workers felt that the advantage of

the increased awareness was having the knowledge of an issue that many people in society are oblivious to on an ongoing basis.

One reason why this particular characteristic could be seen as essential with street involved youth is because of what Rhodes, et al. (1991a) called the 'sixth sense', a term used to describe a desirable characteristics of outreach workers. According to one of the participants, youth involved in prostitution also were seen as relying on their intuition as a necessary adaptation for survival on the streets. It follows that if outreach workers did not illustrate personal integrity, street youth would likely become aware of the deception and trust would be affected.

Because relationships building was considered an essential part of the outreach experience, workers must ensure that their efforts to connect with youth involved in prostitution have as few self constructed barriers as possible. A large part of this is to be able to support their words with their actions. This involves not only personal integrity regarding relationships, but also a willingness to extend oneself and enter into debate regarding the larger issues surrounding prostitution.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations present in the phenomenological approach used in this study. Throughout the research process there was an attempt to be aware of my own biases and presuppositions on the topic I was exploring. My own work in a safehouse environment has affected me deeply and I knew that the thoughts I had on my interactions with individuals involved with prostitution would affect how I received any information on the topic. I attempted to suspend my biases by bracketing my beliefs and presuppositions. This self-reflection is never complete or thorough enough

however, to eliminate my influence on the findings. By locating myself within the text, it is hoped the reader will make their own conclusions regarding the findings of this phenomenological study.

Another limitation of phenomenological research is the generalizability of findings. Osborne (1990) discusses empathic generalizability rather than statistical generalizability as found in quantitative research. Osborne (1990) describes generalizability in phenomenological research as being established after the research is complete (a posteriori), rather than before (a priori). While it is important to be reminded that no two people's perceptions of an experience are ever the same, there are commonalties that exist that may resonate with others who have had similar experiences. The degree to which the participants' experience of outreach work resonate with other outreach workers is evidence of the generalizability of the results.

A final limitation of phenomenological research is our reliance as researchers on language to communicate our ideas. This is evident in both the description of their experiences by participants, as well as the researchers' use of language to synthesize the experience of others. Becker (1986) discusses that a basic qualification of interview participants is that they have salient experiences of the phenomenon and that they must be willing to explore these experiences verbally. Regarding interpretations by researchers based on language, Osborne (1990) writes that

> phenomenological methodology accepts the difficulty of representing human experience through language. Although there are non-verbal ways of communicating, most data are in the form of language which,...does not

necessarily convey lived-experience unambiguously. The meaning of verbal descriptions has to be interpreted by the researcher. (p. 83)

By using language to create meaning, the participants and the researcher inevitably influence what data are collected. This is unavoidable in any form of communication of ideas in that every individual ascribes different meaning to words, gestures, or music. In phenomenological research this necessitates the spiraling process in order to capture as accurately as possible the experience of another person. By circling back to the participant at various points during the analysis, it is hoped that the researcher will capture an accurate understanding of the experience.

Implications for Outreach Workers

The implications for outreach workers have been discussed at the end of each of the sections discussing the themes that evolved, however below will be a synopsis of these points. It is hoped that for established workers, the implications discussed will resonate with their experience with youth involved in prostitution, and for those individuals entering the profession, this may give some understanding to the experience of outreach work.

An important part of the role of an outreach worker is the relationship building process with youth involved in prostitution. This process is influenced by many of the issues discussed in the literature review as well as in the previous sections of this chapter. The building of relationships involves focusing on the needs of youth, which requires youth to become active participants in the process. In order to engage youth in the process, respect and personal integrity are important characteristics for outreach workers. This is achieved through an understanding of the issues surrounding

prostitution and the ability to live one's life with integrity between what one says and what one does. In order to achieve personal integrity, outreach workers must be able to confront their biases and be prepared to challenge inconsistencies within themselves, in societal attitudes and government policies. This may require outreach workers to alter their definitions of success in ways that acknowledge individual circumstances and validate their clients. Outreach workers must be aware that their expectations of clients need to be surpassed by their expectations of themselves.

Implications for Counsellors and Other Helping Professionals

Numerous implications for counsellors and other helping professionals were raised within the study that would benefit work with adolescents involved in prostitution. What became evident during the research is that adolescent involvement in prostitution is an extremely complex social issue. In the past, social science and medical research has concentrated on pathologizing individuals working in prostitution. This approach was based however, on problematic assumptions that did not serve to alleviate individual circumstances. The political, moral and legal questions and debates surrounding the issue of prostitution are important to address, and yet what is often left out of the debate are the voices of those most deeply affected by prostitution, the youth and adults working in the sex trade.

Snell (1995) commented that there is a general lack of understanding on the part of many helping professionals of the issue of prostitution, especially when children and adolescents are involved. Snell wrote

> although individual members of the helping professions struggle to help, the helping professions themselves have not yet made a formal commitment to deal with issues related to prostitution. (p. 93)

Individuals in the helping professions, whether they are working in social work, child welfare, hospitals or in the field of counselling, must educate themselves on the issue of prostitution from the point of view of their clients.

Counsellors must therefore address their own stereotypical beliefs surrounding an individuals' involvement in prostitution and be willing to explore how their presuppositions may effect relationships with clients who have this history. The research and the participants interviewed stressed the need for a non-judgmental attitude and an open-mind towards the experience of others. While it is generally encouraged in the human service field that workers have an open mind, issues that contradict a person's definitions of morality may result in damage to their relationship with clients that will affect the therapeutic alliance. Just as outreach workers must live with integrity, counsellors and others in the helping professions must be weary of personal biases and be willing to confront their issues just as they expect their clients to confront their own issues.

By challenging personal biases and the biases of others, helping professionals can play a role in changing problematic assumptions that continually marginalize individuals involved in prostitution. As clients of the helping professions, individuals involved in prostitution are owed the same respect and admiration we have for any client struggling to overcome difficult circumstances. One of the participants claimed that "helping is healing" for both youth involved in prostitution and those professionals

addressing their needs. By addressing the needs of youth involved in prostitution in a respectful way, individuals in the helping professions may actually realize how much more they need to learn, and how healing this education can be.

Implications for Further Research

One of the demands of youth participants in the conference discussed earlier was the halting of any further research regarding youth involved in prostitution for a period of five years. This appears to be a reaction against what was discussed as a creation of an industry by helping professionals. Part of the problem with encouraging further research is that often money is diverted from actually addressing the needs of youth.

Rather than offer suggestions for future research that continually focus on a pathological view of youth involved in prostitution, it seems important to encourage increased understanding of the unique strengths and resiliency of youth. Snell (1995) commented that

> research is needed that builds on these strengths and the meaning of street experiences of the children themselves without impinging on their liberty or dignity. (p.14)

Future research should therefore play a direct role in the development of services to address the needs of street involved youth and avoid further exploitation of individuals.

Another area that needs to be addressed is societal attitudes towards individuals involved in prostitution. Instead of encouraging assessment of societal attitudes, why not utilize funding for education in communities, schools and among service providers? One of the participants discussed the continued marginalization of youth by helping

professionals, the community and educators. A suggestion for addressing the issue of marginalization is to involve youth as participants in the education process and recognize them as experts of their own experience. This includes compensating youth for their knowledge and involving them in the development of future research projects that play a direct role in addressing their needs.

A further question arises from the discussion of the construction of social problems is, "What happens to the policies of agencies serving marginalized populations when there is increased government funding or outside influence?". Does the issue of institutionalizing knowledge become evident in the policies that develop? Does increased government funding alter program policy or evaluative outcome measures? If policy and evaluation rely on outside interpretations, how will this effect the relationship building process between outreach workers and their clients? These questions are important to be addressed if we are to fully understand the complex issue of addressing the needs of individuals involved in prostitution.

Conclusion

The present study grew out of my desire to understand the experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution, and my curiosity to explore the relationship building process that occurs. To achieve this understanding, the question was posed, "What is the experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution?". Salner (1986) wrote that methods follow from the researcher's questions and that the

> questions reflect the purposes of the research, and the purposes of the research are established by the particular relationship the researcher is attempting to

develop or maintain with the particular community to whom the research is addressed. (p. 119)

As a result of my relationship with adolescents involved in prostitution, and outreach workers, I felt that the phenomenological method would best address my question because of its emphasis on meaning and its focus on individual experience.

Through the use of the phenomenological method, several aspects of outreach work with adolescents in prostitution were illustrated. Although the experience of outreach work with this population is an extremely complex issue on many levels, commonalties arose in the experience of outreach work by participants. One of the key findings in the participants' experience was the need for integrity between one's words and one's actions. This was expressed by all participants as necessary in order to authentically relate to adolescents involved in prostitution. The desire to be authentic led to a re-evaluation of personal relationships, fundamental changes in the way individuals led their lives, and an increased awareness of exploitation on a wider scale.

Another finding was that the nature of outreach work with a marginalized group necessitated confrontation of many barriers. These barriers ranged from a hesitancy by some to develop innovative services to address the needs of clients, to the general bias that exists in much of society against individuals that have been involved in prostitution. Individuals entering this type of work need to confront their own biases about prostitution and be able to ensure that their approach involves respect rather than a 'save the world' attitude. Outreach workers required dogmatism and determination to help overcome these barriers, and advocate for their clients.

Pursuing this topic for my research has led me to a greater understanding of the experience of outreach work with adolescents. Many of the comments made by participants have caused me to reflect on my own misconceptions, and to alter my approach with clients. As well, I feel that the need for personal integrity, whether within a counselling session or in other environments, is an essential part of relationship building in a helping profession. It is my hope that this study will prove enlightening for others who are interested in the experience of outreach work with adolescents involved in prostitution.

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Appendix A

Letter of Introduction/Purpose of the Study

The Experience of Outreach Work with Adolescents Involved in Prostitution

My name is Karen Dushinski and I am a Masters student in counselling in Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta. I am undertaking research in an attempt to gain a clearer understanding of the experience of an outreach worker who works with adolescents involved in prostitution. My interest in this topic stems from my work with the same population and from my curiosity to discover more about another part of the services offered to this group of individuals.

Your participation in the study will include an interview and debriefing. I would like you to take some time to think about your experiences as an outreach worker who works with adolescents involved in prostitution. I would like you to be able to discuss your experience as freely as possible. The interview will last approximately one hour and will be tape recorded for later analysis.

The final interview will occur after I have analyzed the information gained during our interview. This will allow for an opportunity to correct any misunderstandings or misrepresentations of your experience and for me to share my understanding of the interview.

All of the information obtained about you will be kept confidential. I will ask you to choose a name for use in the information in order to maintain this confidentiality, and I will remove any information that could identify you to others. I will keep the information gained from the interview in a secure place.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any point. If you decide that you do not want to participate in the study, any information about you will be destroyed.

Thank you in advance for your time and willingness to share your experiences with me. If you have any further questions about the process please feel free to call me at
466-0960, or you can call my supervisor, Dr. Robin Everall at 492-1163.

Yours Truly,

Karen Dushinski

Appendix B

Consent to Participate

I, _____, am aware that the purpose of this study is to try to understand the experience of an outreach worker who works with adolescent involved in prostitution. I understand that this process will include an interview in which I will be asked to describe my experiences in as much detail as I am able. I also understand that this research is being conducted for a Masters' Thesis by Karen Dushinski under the supervision of Dr. Robin Everall of the Educational Psychology Department at the University of Alberta.

I agree to participate in the study and I am willing to share as many of my experiences as I feel comfortable sharing with Karen. I am aware that the interviews conducted require tape recordings in order to allow for transcription and further analysis. I am aware that my participation in this research is voluntary and that I am able to withdraw from the study at any point. If I choose to withdraw from the study, any information about me or my experiences will be destroyed. I am also aware that if discussion of my experiences raises any concerns for me that I wish to discuss with a counselor, Karen will recommend individuals that I may contact.

I am aware that all information associated with this study is strictly confidential and that my identity, or that of any persons that I mention, will be known only to the researcher and will not be revealed at any point. When transcribing the interview recordings, the researcher will not use my name or the name or any individuals that I may mention. False names will be provided and will be used throughout the research paper. Any details in the interview that may identify me or others will be altered to ensure anonymity. As well, the researcher and supervisor will be the only persons with access to the tape recordings or interview transcripts, and these will be stored in a secure place.

I am also aware that the information obtained from the interview(s) will be used solely for research purposes, and that by signing this consent form it in no way releases the researcher from her professional or legal obligations.

Signature_____

Date_____

Witness_____

Appendix C

Interview Questions

The Experience of Outreach Work with Adolescents Involved in Prostitution

Interview Questions

Could you describe for me your experiences of working with adolescents involved in prostitution?

Background
Could you tell me about any experiences that you may have had before becoming involved the outreach program that may have prepared you for your role?
Could you tell me how you became involved with the outreach program? (personal, career)

Duties of Position
Could you describe your duties and responsibilities as an outreach worker?
What role did you play within the outreach team?
Could you tell me about your relationships with your co-workers?
Could you describe a typical interaction that you may have had with one of the clients of your program? (Where, when, sensory probes)

Impact on Self
Could you describe how working with adolescents involved in prostitution may have effected you personally?

Coping Methods
What types of things did you do that may have helped you cope with your position as an outreach worker? (formal organization or client related stress)
How do outreach workers define success?
What do adolescents involved in prostitution want for their lives? How will they know when they have found it?
Is there anything else that you think is important for me to know in order to understand your experiences as an Outreach worker?

Appendix D

Higher Order Abstractions of Richard's Experience

1. Perception that youth involved in prostitution are victims, yet treated like criminals
2. Shocked that own child same age as children in prostitution
3. Perceives own survival of streets and abuse brought to role in outreach
4. Perception individuals enter outreach for the wrong reasons
5. Belief that youth in prostitution require love, tenderness and understanding not directives
6. Perceives others questioning role in outreach due to race and gender
7. Perception youth are pathologized rather than cared for
8. Own experience leads to lack of trust of 'helping professionals'
9. Awareness own cynicism a result of re-victimization of youth by professionals
10. Perception of Native youth as industry; financial gain for service providers
11. Perceives own longevity as result of work variability
12. Youth as experts of own experience
13. Avoidance of 'bad guy' role facilitates crisis intervention
14. Perception of relationship with co-workers like a marriage
15. Lack of funding requires hands-on work
16. Despite youth mandate, adults seen as necessary connection
17. Perception of self as dogmatic in accessing services
18. Extension of self and family for youth in crisis
19. Perception that services utilized when on youth's turf
20. Services expand according to needs of the clients

21. Awareness of competency as parent; appreciation of family

22. Cynicism a result of society's hypocrisy

23. Experiences bitterness due to antiquated system

24. Perception of continued marginalization of youth

25. Children as coping mechanism, provide bridge from work to home

26. Awareness of youth as reason for continued employment

27. Perceives small measures of success as essential

28. Perceives helping as healing for youth and outreach

Appendix E

Example of Thematic Abstraction of Richard's Experience

Excerpt	Theme
I love it! I work, this is the longest that I've stayed in one place, and why? 'Cause when I get bored, I get bored easy and when I get bored easy I start thinking of other things to do but there's always something to make me want to come back every morning and that's the kids, that's they kids, to make difference in a kids' life.	Awareness of youth as reason for continued employment

Appendix F

Thematic Clusters of Richard's Experience

1. Negative Perceptions of 'Helping Profession'

   (1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 22, 23, 24)

2. Role in Outreach

   (3, 6, 11, 14, 15, 17, 25)

3. Keys to Connecting with Youth

   (12, 13, 16, 26)

4. Understanding the Needs of Youth

   (5, 19, 20, 27)

5. Effects on Self

   (2, 18, 21, 28)

Appendix G

Higher Level Abstraction of Laura's Experience

1. Experiences in outreach cause change in self
2. Perception of self as unprepared for outreach role
3. Fascination, fear; increased awareness of human condition
4. Services expand according to needs of clients
5. Perceives need for advocacy to service providers to overcome stigma of prostitution
6. Perceives role as jack of all trades
7. Perceives self as dogmatic in search for services
8. Intensity of work necessitates leader rotation
9. Agency growth necessitates single leader to streamline agency
10. Perceives trauma and intimacy results in close working relationships
11. Balance needed, avoidance of judgement
12. Perception that offering basic needs sign of caring agency
13. "Why her and why not me?"; spiritual questioning leads to bettering of self
14. Awareness of need for integrity between work and home
15. Feels cleansed by supportive family and friends; strong boundaries between personal and private
16. Successful relationship development leads to extension of self and equality in relationships
17. Perceives 'I' statements indicators of success; quality over quantity
18. Awareness of privilege working with clients

Appendix H

Example of Thematic Abstraction of Laura's Experience

Excerpt	Theme
I think about it on a spiritual level, it can just get sometimes kind of confusing 'cause I think, you know, "Why her, and why not happen to her, this young person, and it didn't happen to me?"... but um, yes if affected me and it affected me for the better. I think um I'm a better, I'm a better woman, I'm a better mother to my daughter ...I think I'm a better sister,... I just appreciate so much what I have, you know from seeing so little from what other people don't have.	"Why her and why not me?"; spiritual questioning leads to bettering of self me? Why did that

Appendix I

Thematic Clusters of Laura's Experience

1. Role in Outreach

   (6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16)

2. Keys to Connecting with Youth

   (11, 12, 17)

3. Understanding the Needs of Youth

   (4, 5)

4. Effects on Self

   (1, 2, 3, 13, 14, 15, 18)

Appendix J

Higher Level Abstraction of Cathy's Experience

1. Understanding of street and home as oppressive for youth
2. Views nurturing and engaging youth foundation for future choices
3. Perceives sense of humour and gift of gab as key to engagement
4. Perceives role as teacher not teller
5. Awareness that continued work creates stronger boundaries
6. Respectful confrontation of issues necessary with youth
7. Street forces reliance on intuition by youth and outreach
8. Breaking patterns seen as answer to maintaining employment
9. Perceives staff diversity as important for connecting with youth
10. Recognition of confidentiality as safety issue
11. Perception youth desire engagement
12. Awareness of advantages and disadvantages to loss of 'rose-colored glasses'
13. Awareness of need for strict boundaries
14. Perceives healthy personal life countering burdens on the soul
15. Awareness that shutting brain off leads to re-energizing of self
16. Awareness of the need for integrity in personal life
17. Recognition that key to connecting is avoidance of owning success or failures
18. Perceives longevity due to small measures of success
19. Feels privileged to connect with 'hard-to-reach' youth
20. Sees individual attention, and caring environment as key
21. Perceives enjoyment of challenge and role as advocate

22. Perceives enjoyment of counselling role and connecting with youth

Appendix K

Example of Thematic Abstraction of Cathy's Experience

Excerpt	Theme
I'll still you know, stir up stuff but you have to be completely aware of what's going on like for safety reasons. Like so on the street or in the van, I want to make sure that my conversations are happening one-to-one and people aren't hearing because I don't want to set people up to get beats... So and I always want to make sure I'm really careful about that whole confidentiality thing	Recognition of confidentiality as safety issue

Appendix L

Thematic Clusters of Cathy's Experience

1. Role in Outreach
   (4, 18)

2. Keys to Connecting

   (2, 3, 9, 17, 20)

3. Understanding the Needs of Youth

   (1, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11)

4. Effects on Self

   (5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22)

Appendix M

Higher Order Abstraction of Bryan's Experience

1. Perceives race and gender as barriers to working with youth
2. Recognition that supplying demands facilitates connecting and trust
3. Recognition that own experiences bring patience and openness to role
4. Perceives listening and hearing leading to understanding
5. Desire to extend services to youth leads to role in outreach
6. Perceives role as informing youth of services and deciphering needs
7. Recognition as youth as priority despite staff shortages
8. Perceives agency growth resulting in less support
9. Perceives staff diversity benefiting connections with youth
10. Recognition that approach more subtle, youth initiating contact
11. Offering youth positive choices and leave decisions to them
12. Perceives relationship with youth providing them accountability
13. Awareness of difficulty dealing with ongoing cycles of abuse
14. Recognition of client safety above own
15. Awareness of the need for integrity between work and home
16. Perception of leisure as break from work; time used wisely
17. View of training leading to growth and increased competency
18. Awareness that own children are grounding; accorded respect
19. Recognition of importance in acknowledging youth's achievements
20. Perceives youth aspiring to work with youth sign of successful intervention
21. Perceives lack of positive nurturing leaves youth vulnerable to exploitation

22. Realization of own limitations; not wanting to extend self

23. Awareness of need for role with more tangible results

Appendix N

Example of Thematic Abstraction of Bryan's Experience

Excerpt	Theme
It was just becoming really a negative type of uh feelings that I was developing because of the bad dates, the reports that you have to write down, um and, and a lot of times the youth don't want to carry on with that as far as making it a, a , you know pressing charges. So that was, I think that was for me hard to deal with um just because of you knew that it may happen again, and again, and again and nothing would be done about it.	Awareness of difficulty dealing with ongoing cycles of abuse

Appendix O

Thematic Cluster's of Bryan's Experience

1. Role in Outreach

   (1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 17, 23)

2. Keys to Connection with Youth

   (4, 9, 10, 11, 19, 20)

3. Understanding the Needs of Youth
   (2, 6, 12, 21)

4. Effects on Self

   (13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 22)

Appendix P

Ten Demands of Youth Participants in Leaving the Streets: Youth Forum to Address the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth. Vancouver, B.C., March 8-9, 2000.

1. We demand the United Nations Rights of the Child to be widely taught in the schools. Public education needs to include prevention and understanding taught by experiential youth.

2. There is a desperate and fundamental need to open long-term transition house along with the need to recognize that transition is a distinct and long-term process.

3. We demand that no more money is spent on research for five years. Put all money into direct services implementing the recommendations from the 1998 International Conference.

4. What is being done to change institutionalized discrimination? We demand intensive specific training for resource workers; ie. Police, welfare workers, etc., who deal with sexually exploited youth. Secondly, there needs to be the implementation of programs for experiential youth to be educated and serve as resource workers.

5. Why are you focusing on prosecuting the pimps and not helping the sexually exploited youth? We need and demand protection without having to press charges.

6. The 72-hour lock-up is dangerous and completely irresponsible along with being short sighted. If you want to do something to help sexually exploited youth this is not the way. Instead of telling us what to do, give us choices.

7. We demand that any family member who has been affected by another family member in the trade must have counseling available to them.

8. We demand recognition that age discrimination is harmful for youth trying to access resources available for exiting, healing and prevention. Don't make strict guidelines and rules because they only cause harm to youth.

9. Post-traumatic stress disorder is recognized in other areas of work, why isn't it available for sexually exploited youth and given the same validity and response as war vets? We demand the same benefits as others suffering.

10. We demand wider community involvement and mentoring by non-professionals. Big brothers and sisters are only one example. Since they are not 'working' for anyone they have no hidden agenda.